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# PROBLEMS AND PRINCIPLES

# PROBLEMS AND PRINCIPLES

## BEING PAPERS ON SUBJECTS THEOLOGICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL

BY

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# PREFACE

BY one of those dispensations of Providence which are so mysterious to us, Robert Campbell Moberly was taken away from the Church on earth last year, just at a time when he seemed to have attained a position and an opportunity of offering her the greatest services by his doctrine and counsel. He had indeed left behind him solid monuments of his teaching in his two greater works, *Ministerial Priesthood* and *Atonement and Personality.* But there are many matters of practical policy which the Church will have to face in the next few years wherein we should greatly desire to have the help of his counsel and judgment. Failing, then, the living voice, we can at least gather up "the fragments which remain," that is to say, the various utterances or papers which from time to time he found occasion to print and publish. In these papers thus collected together we shall happily find, on the one hand, that he has expressed his opinion very clearly on many of the serious problems which are likely to vex the Church in the immediate future, such as the

question of disestablishment, the educational problem, the autonomy of the Church, and the marriage laws ; on the other hand, his theological papers form a series which serves to illustrate the larger work on the Atonement, and adds emphasis to the more characteristic points of his teaching on the subjects of the Personality of God and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

The papers have been practically reprinted as they first appeared, with a slight exception in the case of the paper on the marriage laws, where some small verbal changes have been made without any alteration in the sense. As the papers cover a space of twenty years, to republish them in this manner may be liable to a charge of unfairness towards their author, as making no allowance for development of thought or change of opinion. But the date of each paper is given at its head ; and further, as Dr. Moberly was never wont to form an opinion on an important matter until he had thoroughly reasoned it out, so when he had thus made up his mind he was not one lightly to change it. So, in fact, we find that the strong opinion on marriage with a deceased wife's sister to which he gave utterance (in the above-mentioned paper) in the year 1884, he expressed with no less insistence in the lower house of Convocation in 1901. The pamphlet on the Independence of Church Courts, which did not attract much attention in the year when it first appeared (1886), he reissued in 1899

without alteration, but prefixing a letter to the Dean of Christ Church.

The collection has been entitled *Problems and Principles*, because Dr. Moberly's great aim was to get at the right principles underlying the matter in hand, compared with which he considered that the details are of small importance. He was deeply convinced of the vast influence that is exercised upon mankind by ideas, and that right thinking must in the long run win the victory—*fortis est veritas et praevalet;* and with this conviction he fearlessly assailed the problems that face us, whether in theology or in ecclesiastical politics. Further, the fact that his writings are concerned with principles gives them a permanent value reaching beyond the particular circumstances which were their immediate occasion. Including nearly all his printed utterances outside his books, the form of these papers is varied—some are sermons, some pamphlets, some papers read at meetings; but under the diversity of form lies a fundamental unity of thought and method. In arranging the papers attention has been paid to their subject-matter and logical connection rather than to the chronological order of their composition.

A description of the contents of the volume is subjoined. In connection with this the reader may find it convenient to have before him these dates of the author's life. Robert Moberly (*nat.* July 26th, 1845) was made Vicar of Great Bud-

worth, in Cheshire, in 1880; in 1892 he was appointed Professor of Pastoral Theology, and Canon of Christ Church, at Oxford. In 1889 he contributed to *Lux Mundi* an essay on "The Incarnation as the basis of dogma." He published in 1896 *Reason and Religion: Some aspects of their mutual interdependence;* in 1897 *Ministerial Priesthood: Chapters on the rationale of Ministry and the meaning of Christian Priesthood;* in 1901 *Atonement and Personality;* and in 1902 a volume of sermons entitled *Christ our Life.* For the sake of completeness mention should be made of *Sorrow, Sin, and Beauty,* three short series of addresses, published in 1889, reissued in 1902. On June 8th, 1903, his career on earth was closed. 'Requiescat in pace.'

## *DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS*

### PART I: THEOLOGICAL SUBJECTS

1. Belief in a Personal God is a paper which was read at the Church Congress at Rhyl in 1891. In connection with this paper there is to be noted a change in the writer's mind, not so much in regard of belief, as of phraseology. This we learn from the following note, which is taken from page 237 of *Atonement and Personality:*

"In connection with this section of the present chapter [on 'The Holy Spirit in relation to human personality'], I may perhaps be allowed to make reference to an essay on the mutual interdependence of *Reason and Religion*, in which

I endeavoured, a few years ago, to discuss with somewhat more fulness the true meaning, and the different manifestations, of reason. I refer to it in the main, simply as a more expanded statement of my present meaning. But whilst doing so I should like to take the opportunity of saying expressly that in the opening pages of the last paper which that little volume contains there are a few phrases which I should certainly wish to modify now. The modification would be rather in pursuance, than in contradiction, of what was really the essential thought of that paper. But I should certainly now prefer to avoid, as misleading, any use, in reference to human personality, of any phrase, such as a 'distinct centre of being,' which might even seem to conceive of it at all otherwise than in its capacity of relation to, and dependence on, God."

2. Reason in relation to Christian Evidences is an extract from the opening sermon of a course on Christian evidences, preached at Bowdon, in Cheshire, in the early part of 1891.

3. Reason and Theology is a University sermon preached at Oxford on January 20th, 1895. In the preceding autumn a proposal had been made by the Theological Board to improve the method of taking the theological degrees. The Hebdomadal Council refused to allow this, unless the existing limitation of these degrees to those in priests' orders were removed; and in view of this condition the proposal was ultimately allowed to drop. Before this, however, there had been a conference on the matter in November, 1894, at which Moberly took a leading part; and in the following January he gave full utterance to his convictions in this sermon, which is a strong and reasoned argument against the possibility of adopting "undenominationalism" as a principle in the teaching of theology. Some years later, as we shall see, he was moved to write against the

same principle in relation to the public elementary schools.

Nos. 1, 2, and 3, together with an essay on the nature and function of the rational element in man, were published in *Reason and Religion: Some aspects of their mutual interdependence* (Longmans, 1897), a volume which, with the *Lux Mundi* essay on "The Incarnation as the basis of dogma," forms Moberly's chief contribution to apologetic theology.

4. A Religious View of Human Personality is a University sermon, preached at Oxford on October 2nd, 1902, and printed in the *Journal of Theological Studies* for January, 1903. Coming after the publication of *Atonement and Personality*, it developes the theory of personality therein set forth, especially in relation to the meaning of human personality.

5. The Fulham Conference on Communion with the Atonement. In the autumn of 1900 a conference of representatives of different schools of theology, at the invitation of the Bishop of London (Dr. Creighton), met at Fulham Palace and discussed the doctrine of the Eucharist. They published a report which elicited a criticism from Moberly in the *Journal of Theological Studies* of the following April. The special point he selected for consideration, *Communion with the Atonement*, leads him to examine the relation of the Atonement to the Eucharist, and makes the article a useful appendix to *Atonement and Personality*. It may be as well at this point also to call attention to his utterances on the same subject in *Priesthood and Sacrifice*, the report of a similar conference held at Dr. Sanday's lodgings in Christ Church, in December, 1899, in which he had taken part.

6. The Doctrine of the Holy Ghost, a University sermon preached at Cambridge on Trinity

Sunday, May 20th, 1894, is an exposition of a doctrine which was peculiarly precious to the preacher, as being that which completes the system of Christianity and enables it to become life and power to the individual believer. Compare *Atonement and Personality*, chapter viii.

7. The Enrichment of Private Prayer is a Church Congress paper read at Derby in 1882, and published by the S. P. C. K. in 1897. This paper is rather devotional than theological; but it comes with some fitness after the preceding papers, and especially the last, as an illustration how the writer would translate his theology into devotion.

## PART II: ECCLESIASTICAL SUBJECTS

8. Considerations upon Disestablishment and Disendowment is a thorough analysis of the principles which should guide the Churchman-citizen in taking action either for or against "disestablishment." The pamphlet owed its origin to the agitation in 1894 for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales, and in particular to certain circumstances which are alluded to in the prefatory remarks, and an account of which is here extracted from the *Guardian* of October 3rd, 1894.

"The Conference met on Wednesday, September 26th, in the Sheldonian Theatre, at 10.30 a.m. . . .

"*Welsh Disestablishment.*

"*The Earl of Jersey* moved 'that in the opinion of this conference every effort should be made to oppose the disestablishment and disendowment of the four Welsh dioceses of the province of Canterbury.'

"*Mr. Arnold Burrowes* seconded the motion, . . . and it was carried *nem. con.*

"*Lord Stanmore,* in a somewhat lengthy speech, moved

'that the formation of a diocesan committee and of parochial committees, as recommended by the two archbishops, is expedient and should be at once undertaken.' . . . The motion was seconded by *Mr. Barnett, of Glympton.*

"*Canon Moberly* proposed an amendment, the object of which was to retain the diocesan, but to omit the parochial committees. He argued that the cause of disestablishment was, unfortunately, identified with one political party, and that it was not well to marshal the whole array of the Church in a matter on which a Churchman might hold one view or the other without forfeiting his character as a faithful Churchman . . . The amendment [which was seconded by the *Rev. Charles Gore*] was lost."

9. UNDENOMINATIONALISM AS A PRINCIPLE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION, a pamphlet published in 1902, was Dr. Moberly's last work. It needs no explanation, as it was occasioned by the education controversy which is still with us. As an argument against the possibility of basing religious teaching upon "undenominationalism," it should be read together with *Reason and Theology:* it should also be read in the light of *The Doctrine of the Holy Ghost,* as showing what a practical bearing that doctrine has upon the problems of human life.

10. IS THE INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCH COURTS REALLY IMPOSSIBLE? is a strong argument, based on the practice of the United States of America and the Established Church of Scotland, to show that autonomy of the Church in relation to its judicial system is quite compatible with "establishment." The argument also leads to the criticism of some common but fallacious views of the meaning of the "royal supremacy." The pamphlet was first published in 1886 (Parker), and then reissued in 1899 with a prefatory *Letter to the Dean of Christ Church* (Dr. Paget, now Bishop of Oxford).

11. Church Membership and the Laws of Marriage. In the years 1883–4 a determined effort was made to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister, which was met by a counter effort on the part of the Church. It was a subject on which Moberly felt deeply, and he did not keep silence. Some of the leaflets of the Marriage Law Defence Association came from his pen, but his chief services were rendered locally. In the winter 1883–4 he thoroughly examined the Church's doctrine on the matter in four addresses to the members of the Chester Clerical Society, which were afterwards published as *The Light of the Revelation of God upon the question of Marriage with a Sister-in-law* (Phillipson and Golder). These addresses are not reproduced here, because of their length and because the pith of the argument is presented in a more vigorous and incisive manner in a paper which he subsequently wrote, and which is here reprinted. This paper was read on November 7th, 1884, in the Public Hall at Warrington, at the annual meeting and conversazione of the local branch of the English Church Union. It served excellently, moreover, as a popular pamphlet, of which form of literature we have another instance in *Undenominationalism*. In this short paper little or nothing is said about the arguments drawn from the Old Testament; but the deficiency was fully supplemented by a speech made by Dr. Moberly in the Canterbury Convocation on May 9th, 1901, seventeen years later. This speech is accordingly reprinted in the text, being taken from the *Chronicle of Convocation for* 1900–1, pp. 207–9.

12. Doctrinal Standards. The question how far subscription to creeds can be compatible with the freedom of the individual conscience is a perennial

problem. It has been brought before us of recent years in a very acute form, as affecting the very core of the Christian faith, viz. the Apostles' Creed; and in view of this difficulty these lectures were delivered by Dr. Moberly at Pusey House, Oxford, in the autumn of 1897, and afterwards published as No. 1 of *Pusey House Occasional Papers* (Longmans).

13. The Pastoral Office of the Bishop. In this sermon, preached at the consecration of Dr. Gore, Bishop of Worcester, in Lambeth Chapel, on St. Matthias' Day, 1902, Moberly gave utterance to his deep conviction of the need of a great increase of the episcopate to enable both the bishop to carry out the true ideal of his office, and the Church to realise in practice the ideal of episcopal government according to which she is constituted.

*** Hearty thanks are due to the following publishers and editors for leave to reprint the various papers: more particularly to Messrs. Longmans and Co. for allowing us to extract Nos. 1–3 from *Reason and Religion*, and to reprint No. 12; to the Committee of Direction of the *Journal of Theological Studies* for Nos. 4 and 5; to the Editor of the *Cambridge Review* for No. 6; to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge for No. 7; to Messrs. Parker and Co. for Nos. 8 and 10; to Messrs. Phillipson and Golder for No. 11; and to the Editor of the *Guardian* for No. 13.

R. B. R.

*Ascensiontide*, 1904

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# PART I

# THEOLOGICAL

# PROBLEMS AND PRINCIPLES

## BELIEF IN A PERSONAL GOD

(A paper read at the Rhyl Church Congress in 1891.)

LET me say, first, that the word "God," if it means anything, must mean, to me, at least this—supreme perfectness of Being. By God I must mean the highest. I cannot without contradiction conceive at one moment both God and a higher or more comprehensive than God. If, then, I am asked whether I believe in a personal God, the question to me must mean, not whether I imagine, amongst existences, that of one extra, invisible, but indefinitely magnified, shadow of humanity, but whether I am convinced that the supreme sum and crown of all existence is Personal.

Again, a few words as to what Personality means to me. I cannot frame an abstract definition of it. If I call it self-consciousness, the emphasis is upon the "self." And in fact there is nothing else, except itself, by which we can understand or explain personality. But if I still

try to describe what the word suggests to me, I would rather say not so much the presence of intelligence, will, etc., but more eminently the fact of being a centre to which the universe of being appears in relation, a distinct centre of being,[1] a subject, whereof reason, affection, will, consciousness itself, are so many, not separate parts, but several aspects or activities. For the moment I must rest with this.

I. Now, the fact of intelligent consciousness in man has led on by necessary steps to the postulate of a supreme universal consciousness, whose thought is the world. It is not urged that this follows as demonstrative knowledge, but as necessary hypothesis—never, indeed, scientifically demonstrable—yet as hypothesis so necessary, so fundamental, that without it all knowledge and thought whatever becomes unrelated, irrational, chaotic. I may explain that I mean to refer to such an argument as that of Mr. Green, in his *Prolegomena.*

Without another word I must take this argument, in the main, for granted. But may I remark that the word "consciousness" is apt to be ambiguous; and consciousness is not the ultimate fact in man except when it is tacitly taken as equivalent to self-consciousness, the realisation of his own personality? More ultimate in man than the *Cogito* is the *Ego sum* which has been

[1] [See page viii.]

based upon it. Not the fact that he thinks, but the fact that he is that of which thought-capacity is an aspect or corollary, is the primary datum of all knowledge and thought. He thinks, indeed, likes, wills, acts; but that central fact of which these all are but so many partial aspects is the fact that he is a self.

Now, if the argument is to proceed, as it must, from the basis of our own self-consciousness, it would seem to be more in accordance with the data to use, not only the secondary fact of man's intelligence, but the primary fact of his self-hood, as carrying us on by necessary steps to the postulate, not merely of a supreme universal intelligence, whose thought is the world, but of a supreme Personality, of whose self-existence the thought that constitutes and informs the world is but one aspect or mode.

Here, again, as in the former case, we have rather a necessary hypothesis than demonstrative knowledge. But is not the hypothesis at least a necessary one? If, for the very idea of a kosmos, we must assume one all-informing, omnipresent intelligence, how can we stop short, in our intellectual necessity, of a Person whose intelligence it is? Intelligence is an inconceivable abstraction—in the very act of mounting the throne of universal sovereignty it dissolves, after all, into voidness without a meaning, except it be an activity or aspect of the being of an intelligent personality.

But if intelligence is really inconceivable apart from an intelligent one, the supposition that an intelligent one can be only intelligent—a living reason without affection, moral character, or whatever else belongs to our necessary conception of a self—this, if not inconceivable, is at least gratuitous. It is an arbitrary imagination, not following out the lines of any data which the world of experience either presents or suggests to us.

Or, to put this differently, it is plain that in our experience of existence there are moral data everywhere, not less obvious, though perhaps more complex, than the rational; and that moral personality is in fact the highest phenomenon to be found in experience:—not intellect, not will, not even all-sacrificing love—in impersonal abstraction; but these as aspects of personality—personality as that in which these really are, and which itself is in them. Either, then, there is no supreme existence, in which case everything is irrational, and there is really neither knowledge nor universe; or the supreme existence is indefinitely lower than its own lower manifestations; or the supreme existence is Personal.

Personality, involving, as necessary qualities of its being, reason, will, love, is incomparably the highest phenomenon known to experience, and as such has to be related with whatever is above it and below it by any philosophy based upon experience. But among personalities there are higher and lower. The highest phenomenon,

then, known to experience, is moral personality in its most advanced stages of beauty, verging more and more towards its own ideal, growing with visible approach into the lineaments of perfect goodness.

Either, then, the highest phenomenon known to experience is a more and more glorious approach towards the blankness of an abstraction which is really non-existent—a view which gives the lie not only to every kindling aspiration, but to every essential condition of intellect, —or supreme existence is that towards which the most beautiful fulness of human personality is but an approach. But in this case it cannot be lower than personality in its stages of imperfectness. Supreme existence is either inferior to man, with an inferiority which is literally immeasurable, or it is all, at least, which we have known, or can conceive, in Personality. The universe is a chaos void of relations, and man's existence an intolerable enigma and bathos, if the supreme existence does not comprise, as well as transcend, everything in human personality which makes that personality what it is—the crowning phenomenon of experience, the crowning conception, open to us, of existence.

II. Now, in all this I have been starting from myself—that is, from human experience of personality ; that is, from personality which, at best, is plainly finite, not self-caused, dimly feeling

after the conditions of its own existence, conscious of innumerable limitations, most imperfectly realising itself; so that, when I come to think of it, even when I try to speak simply of my own experience of myself, I am speaking of something which, though suggested by experience, is *not* realised in experience, something which transcends the limitations under which alone I have known it, something to which nothing that I know fully corresponds. This is true, not only of some imaginary absolute, it is true of any idea I can possibly form of the meaning of the word "personality" as applied to myself. Even this, as I cannot but conceive it, is always more than any momentary, or any collective, experience of mine.

Now, the moment I realise that experience of human personality, though the only knowledge by which we can conceive personality is yet but a dim approach to an idea not attained by it, nor (we may say) attainable, I begin to understand a little better what I am aiming at in arguing for Supreme Personality. It is not that human personality is a realised completeness to which we desire to make our conceptions of Divine Being correspond, but rather that human experience gives us indications of what Personality, in its fuller realisation, would mean. Personality that lives only under material conditions in a world of dying, personality whose existence and origin are alike wholly independent

of its own thought and will, and which only by degrees discovers a little as to the conditions of its own being—whatever rank it may hold in relation to other present phenomena—is plainly a most limited and imperfect form of personality. Only, then, Supreme Being can attain the full idea of Personality. The ideals which hover behind and above human experience are suggestions, are approaches more or less, towards that.

III. And then, by consequence from these thoughts, one step more—namely, that created personalities, which themselves are finite, will only attain their own finite personality perfectly in union with the Infinite Divine.

The relation of the sanctified spirit of man with the Spirit of God that sanctifieth it may be said, perhaps, to involve no difficulty of thought so long as the man is only too sharply differentiated by sin or imperfection. But carry the thought on from all imperfect stages to the perfection of ultimate Beatitude—no trace left of independency of self-hood, no divergence of thought, feeling, or will—perfect Oneness at last, in the highest conceivable fulness of the words, "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit";[1] and what, *then*, exactly, in that supreme unity of spirit, constitutes the distinction between the beatified spirit and its God? Or is perfect beatification, after all, but a Christian form of Nirvana,

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

a merging of separate personality in the life Divine?

I have, indeed, a further object in raising the question. For the difficulty, whatever it be, of conceiving personal distinctness where there is flawless unity of mind and spirit, coupled with the fact that both the distinctness and the unity must be true, if beatification is not to be Nirvana after all, is suggestive also in reference to the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

I am very far from meaning that the unity of a beatified spirit with God is wholly the same as the unity which binds the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, or that the distinction of Persons in the Blessed Trinity is the same as that which would distinguish a spirit in bliss from its God; but I do suggest that the intellectual difficulty of conceiving the coincidence of distinctness and unity is so far not dissimilar in the one case and the other, that if you could prove to me that the Athanasian doctrine was irrational, you would by the force of the same proof compel me to choose between eternal separation of spirit from God, or eternal obliteration of myself.

Now, even to raise this question seems to me to help forward our thought. The beatified soul is not God, yet is one with God. What is that, then, which constitutes at once its eternal distinction from, its eternal union with, God? Perhaps the nearest answer that can be given is

—Reciprocation of love. To the nature of this belongs at once essential unity and essential non-identity—a unity which, but for the personal distinctness, would be but the dead shadow of a living unity, a unity which mere identification would instantly destroy. (I can but glance, in parenthesis, at the scriptural view of the unity of husband and wife, and that mystery of meanings behind, to which the loveliest ideal of marriage unity stands only as shadow of suggestion.)

IV. But if union with God is necessary for the full personality of created persons, is union with created persons equally necessary for the Personality of Supreme Being?

The question would only be difficult to those who, in their adoration of Divine unity, insist on seeing a merely numerical oneness. For this they are content to strip Supreme Personality of some of the conditions which, to us at least, make Personality intelligible; perhaps even to shrink from contemplating Supreme Being at all (as Dr. Martineau says that Unitarians commonly do),[1] except in manifested relations to a visible universe, of which, however much it may be informed by Him, this must at least remain eternally true, that He is more than it. But, indeed, the mutual love between God and created beings, even where it has reached its perfectness, though

[1] *Essays*, vol. ii.: "A Way out of the Trinitarian Controversy," pp. 527, 533, 534.

it exhaust the whole possibility of the creature, cannot perfectly fulfil the Being of God.

We seem, then, to ourselves to be uttering only a truism when we say that Supreme Personality must not lack, it must have within itself, as parts of its being, every condition of Supreme Personality. Foremost among such conditions we cannot but conceive that wherein even reason and self-consciousness find their climax—satisfaction of perfect love. But love that is not mutual is not perfect love.

Without this, then, we must still doubt whether any conception of supreme existence can be, for us, quite real; whether any true meaning can be put into such words as that God is an Almighty, or Eternal, or Infinite Personality; whether the conception of the existence from eternity of a single Personality, sole, unrelated, unique—One within whom there is not both active and passive, both subject and object, both contemplating and being contemplated, both loving and being loved —is so much as a consistent possibility; whether, that is to say, the meaning of eternal existence, as applied to such an one, is, after all, for us, distinguishable from eternal non-existence.

Brevity has compelled me to omit a score of apologies. But, once for all, let me say that I do not dream either that human reason can, by arguing, prescribe the conditions of Divine existence, or that these things which I have tried to indicate are themselves achievements of reason.

Rather it is that in these things, when revealed, Reason finds a harmony which she elsewhere had sought in vain.

V. Does anyone say that those who find relatedness, mutual knowledge, mutual love, within the necessity of Supreme Being itself, are, at all events, qualifying, straining, the conception of unity? I submit that they are rather strongly reinforcing it. It might possibly be urged that in eternal reciprocity of Infinite Love, not only is there a real unity, but a unity profounder, more living, truer, *even as unity*, than the loneliness of a merely numerical singularity; at the least, we may venture to doubt whether a conception so external as oneness of mere number can exhaust the meaning of the unity of the Living God; at the least, we may claim that for us our faith in a Monad is a faith, not with less, but with more richness of meaning, when it images to us, as its inner principle of oneness, not barely the unit of arithmetic, but also the Unity of the Spirit, which is Love.

# REASON IN RELATION TO CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

(Portions of a sermon preached at Bowdon, in Cheshire, on January 11th, 1891—First Sunday after the Epiphany.)

. . . . . .

I AM to speak as in introduction to the work of a Christian Evidence Society. Now, Christian evidences may be said, as such, to be an appeal distinctively to the intellect; the business rather of the reason than the conscience, of the head than the heart. On the other hand, it is clear that it is not only the reason or intellect—it is at least as much the heart and conscience of men—that we, as Christian witnesses, desire to convince. Indeed, objection is sometimes taken on principle to anything like an argumentative Christianity—any appeal which can be scornfully described as "logical." It is love, we are reminded, not logic, that will make the Christian. Again and again, we are told, ten thousand instances have proved that when every argument had been tried and failed, it was Christian sympathy that leapt past the barriers of the heart; it was the warm real touch of love without, at which, beyond all hope, love burst

into flame within, and in the melting of love the soul was transformed and convinced. No doubt; it is true; we readily concede all this. But does it follow, indeed, that therefore the argumentative appeal to evidence is an appeal in vain? Or, if we know that it does not, why does it not?

We might make answer, no doubt, by drawing sharply the distinction between man's different powers—between the reason, the affection, and the will; by conceding, indeed, to the heart and its affections a place of primary greatness, yet pleading that at least the reason *also* has its sphere, and in its sphere its necessities. We might urge that even if it be *through* the affections, and in the second instance, yet reason has to be convinced; that it asks questions, and must in its turn be satisfied; that even if reason touch not the highest regions, yet spiritual truths must not be *irrational*, and therefore not only that in the sphere of reason special charges must be met, special difficulties explained, but the essential coherence of religious truth, with the utmost that reason is capable of, must be shown; and so that there still remains for intellectual argument a work which, even if subordinate, is none the less essential.

All this, no doubt, is, in its own way, true. Yet this is not quite what I desire to say to-day. For this depends too much upon the sharpness of distinction between the intellectual and the spiritual sides of man's nature. What I should

prefer to say, tends rather, as I hope, to draw them nearer together.

When Christian believers, fired with the glow of a burning heart-conviction, disparage by comparison the merely intellectual aspect of their faith; or when sceptics, disparaging everything that is not intellectual, challenge us to convince their reason alone, distrusting devotion, enthusiasm, and every kind of deeper experience, as so many perversions and disturbances to the rightful sovereignty of pure reason; are not both guilty, more or less, in the fact that both imply the possibility of abstracting reason, and dealing with it, in isolation by itself,—guilty of what is really both an intellectual and a practical mistake? No doubt there is a sense in which we can think of any two things apart—the eye apart from the brain, the concave apart from the convex, the world apart from its course; so, if we please, we can by mental analysis distinguish in man not only the body and the soul, but also the soul and the spirit; the affections, the reason, and the will; the judgment and the conscience, and so forth: yet we need to be reminded that these several so-called parts of a compound nature are not parts like the parts of a building, aggregated but separable; they are more like the different qualities of a flame which *is* burning and *is* light; they are so many aspects or workings of one central reality, distinguishable only in idea, but in fact indivisible for ever. The

reason in any man is no abstract power, separable from himself. His reason is the reason of a person. *It is a person*, viewed in respect of his consciously intelligent insight. It is *himself intelligent*, *himself understanding*. But he himself, as an intelligent being, having insight and understanding, cannot be separate from what he himself is. The intelligence may, indeed, be trained to do certain special duties which seem to have little relation with the character of the man; but the intelligence, as a whole, in its widest meaning and range—the total man's power of perceiving, assimilating, knowing—cannot be independent—nay, it is itself but one aspect—of what the total man is.

If we are to say that evidences, or judgment upon evidences, are really affairs of the intelligence, we must at the same time give its full range of meaning to the word "intelligence." We must not shut it off as a mere, perhaps narrow, department of man's conscious nature; for it is as wide as is his consciousness, except in so far as we admit that there are elements in his consciousness which would be rightly described as *un*intelligent. Evidences? They are, indeed, of more kinds than one. There are some kinds of evidence, of which a man (if there were one) without any character at all, a mere calculating machine, neither soul nor spirit, would be the best and most unerring judge.

. . . . . .

It is, then, not only the evidence that is different in this case; the faculty of apprehending and pronouncing upon the evidence (though in name identified) is different also. There are elements in the evidence which are not patient at all of a strictly logical or mathematical statement; which words cannot fully express, though they may indicate, but *indicate only to the moral perceptions* of those who have a moral apprehension. For, indeed, merely external facts, though given with photographic exactness, can never be evidence, apart from the intelligent insight which gives interpretation to them. That interpretative power which makes them relevant, and gives them meaning—the unifying, vivifying creativeness of intelligence—flashes out upon them from within, from the personal apprehension which takes cognisance of them. And therefore, in a case like this, the part of the evidence that could be made intelligible to an intellect wholly non-moral, would be but an insignificant fraction of the whole.

If these things be true at all, they may perhaps, at least, suggest a further step. I have spoken of moral experience. The Christian religion believes in possibilities higher still than this. If St. Paul found Christians whose Christianity knew nothing of the life of the Holy Spirit, he could but ask them in amazement, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" If there be any truth at all in this higher aspiration, this

belief in spiritual life, which is what life in the Church of Christ *means*, it is only natural to suppose that something analogous will be true in this case also. If the truths of a religion which is spiritual, not less than historical, be a question of "evidences," to be decided by the "reason," yet neither the evidences which have to be understood and pronounced upon, nor the reason which has to sit in judgment upon them, are in all points wholly identical in kind with the evidence produced, or the intelligence pronouncing, in matters into which no spiritual element enters.

Do we suggest, then, that spiritual truths are to be apprehended by something that is other than intelligent? other than intelligence? No; not for a moment. Any more than morality which is not, above all things, intelligent, could pronounce in a moral perplexity. Intelligence, reason, it must essentially be—but it must be spiritual intelligence; intelligence of which spirtual sensitiveness, spiritual experience, forms a vital element; intelligence which, uninformed spiritually, would be *un*intelligent—would be "foolishness"—on a spiritual subject-matter; in a word, no mere abstract intelligence, but the intelligence *of a spiritual personality*.

There are parts, indeed, of the teaching of Jesus Christ, of which it was characteristic, that they habitually appeared to the dry light of the reasonable Jews to be not untrue only, but essentially unreasonable. I can but refer in

general terms to the third, the sixth, and the eighth chapters of St. John. But it is not only that there are some subjects which are more exclusively spiritual. It is not only that it is worse than useless to bring in the shrewdness of the counting-house or of the laboratory, in order to gauge aright the character of regeneration or of penitence, or to measure the possibilities of sacramental grace: such a question as that of the presentment in the Gospels of the story of the Incarnate Life,—even that of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which may seem, above all, to be a question of the barest historical fact,—is none the less mixed in character. In the full appreciation of the evidence there are elements involved deeper than the merely historical ones—considerations which go to the root of our spiritual consciousness. It is vain to protest against them. They are there. The evidence which omits them, however conscientiously marshalled, will still be but part of the whole.

It is no bare fact, the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It cannot be separated from what it means, and is. It is full of meanings—meanings which interpret and illuminate, and receive again illumining interpretation from, every deeper craving and experience of man. All history led to it, culminated in it, is explained by it; all history, not the outward history only of kingdoms and peoples, but the inner record of man—man's failure and need, man's progress,

aspiration, possibility, man's self-sacrifice, sanctification, blessedness—hinge and depend on it. There are points in its total evidence which can be more truly apprehended by an old woman practising self-denial for love's sake, or a penitent tender from his first humiliating confession, than by the most consummate mathematician, or metaphysician, or logician in the world. Something in this direction perhaps all would allow. My point is that the difference between them is not merely one of moral or spiritual excellence—that the penitent or the old woman excels not merely in *deserving*, but in *capacity* (in a certain direction) for rational apprehension; the difference is *in the intelligence* as well as in the character. The intelligence of a rational animal, the intelligence of a moral consciousness, the intelligence of a spiritual personality, though one in name, are in content and quality not identical.

What does our Lord Jesus Christ mean when He says, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes"; and, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God"; and, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life"?[1]

[1] St. Matt. xi. 25; St. John vii. 17, vi. 63; cf. 1 Cor. i. 18–31, ii. 11–16, etc., etc.

I must not, indeed, stay to illustrate ; but there are one or two things more to be said.

This first. It is by no means suggested that one man *is* simply a rational animal ; another is a morally conscious being ; and a third, alone of the three, is a spiritual personality. On the contrary, I suppose that every one of these three assertions may probably be made, with more or less truth, of every man living ; but at least these three strands of the complex being may, and do, predominate very varyingly in varying persons ; and, with corresponding variety, their powers of intelligent apprehension in different directions do differ not quantitatively only, but qualitatively—not in degree only, but in kind.

Again, if there is a sense in which we protest against abstracting reason from the individual personalities reasoning, and insist that with varieties of character it too, and its possibilities, will be found to vary, this does not mean an ultimate scepticism as to the unity or reality of reason ; it will not end by making every person a standard of reason to himself. No ; man may differ from man, while all are imperfect, in quality as well as quantity of intelligent reason. But the different qualities are not ultimately in contrast ; in their highest perfection they are transfused into one world-embracing unity ; all the wisdom that seemed merely intellectual is seen to be moral also ; all the moral, tinged with new force and fire, is transfigured into celestial glory.

All are spiritual *then*, when the world and all that is in it has plainly become a working, and therefore a revelation, of the eternal God.

For the reason which the processes of the universe are found to obey; the reason which discerns and appreciates some sequences of fact as moral laws; the reason in which certain revelations as to holiness and sin, pardon and love, and the being and character of God, find their profound reflection and acceptance;—all this is but an echo, more or less complete and true, in the spirit of man, of the Supreme Reason—the Reason, or Wisdom, or Utterance (λόγος) of God. "For she is the brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness. And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets. For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom."[1] This is He in whose image man was made; without whom "was not anything made that was made"; "who, being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power . . . sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world." So the great words

[1] Wisdom vii. 26–8.

of challenge ring out to our intellects and consciences still. They are the challenge of the religion of Jesus Christ to the world. There is in them no call to abnegation, no limiting of the freedom or power of intellect. But there is a warning that the perfect way of intellect lies in a direction otherwise than men might have supposed; that the intellect cannot in the end be abstracted from the total character; that the intellect is only perfectly intellectually true when it is perfectly in harmony with other necessities and powers of the personal life; when intellect and conscience, mind and will, the logical, the moral, the spiritual capacities, are but different aspects of one central light, and that light a true reflection from the perfectness of light wherefrom it came;—there is a warning, in short, that the way of intellect will be missed after all, except it be found, in its highest culmination, to coincide with an absolute homage—mental, moral, and spiritual, all in one—to the Divine glory of One who, though more, was, and is, for ever amongst and above men. Study, then, in thought and word and deed; study, with all the fulness of homage of which you are capable, the Personality of Jesus Christ. He Himself promises you, in this, the light of life. And, indeed, He Himself absolutely demands this of you. There *are* those—and I challenge you to find an alternative, I do not say more lovely, more winning, more beautiful, but more strictly according to the exigencies of the

highest reason,—there *are* those who so feel His measureless superiority, and the unconditioned allegiance which they, in every fibre of their nature, owe to Him, as to know that intellectual subordination to Him, if at any time they cannot follow Him, is no degradation, but a glory to themselves and their intellect—for intellect is only perfectly illumined in harmony with goodness, and this is a step towards the harmony which so illumines; nay, who would even, if the paradox could conceivably represent anything but paradox, rather ten thousand times, for Reason's own sake, be as fools in conjunction with Him, than wise with the uttermost wisdom that could conceivably be apart from Him—Him who, intellectually, morally, and spiritually, is their supreme perfection and their God!

# REASON AND THEOLOGY

(A sermon preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, on January 20th, 1895.)

"*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (St. John i. 1).

POSSIBLY it would be right to begin with some form of apology for venturing to prefix to any sermon whatever words of import so vast as these. Nevertheless, however much, from the outset, the text must shame the discourse, it may yet be true that no words would connect themselves more directly with such thoughts as the discourse would fain try to suggest. For I desire to speak a little of what, for us, the very term "theology" means; and of some of the characteristics which differentiate the study of it from other fields of human study or knowledge.

"In the beginning was the Word." If I venture to set out from this verse of St. John, need I begin by reminding you, in connection with this verse, how much wider is the scope of the Λόγος of St. John than of the English "Word"? However true it may be that the title as used by St. John has its direct and primary reference to revealed utterance rather than to indwelling

wisdom, that the Λόγος to him is "Word" rather than "Reason," yet it must needs remain that whatever of truth was meant, or was being felt after, in the Hebrew personification of Wisdom, or the Greek speculation as to underlying Reason or Mind, is still necessarily within both the verbal scope and the religious truth of the Λόγος, as it hardly can be within the English "Word."

"The Word was with God, and the Word was God." A wonderful commentary, then, upon the name θεολογία, is for us in these words with which the verse culminates, θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

"The Word, the Λόγος, was God." This, with the context of the next few verses, is vindication indeed of language, of reason, of mind. Whatever there is in the human mind of reasonable consciousness, whatever capacity there is in human utterance of expression of the living character within, is it, in its ultimate nature, tentative, or capricious, or illusory? The illuminative light of human consciousness or character, if ever or wherever these realise without perversion their own true being, is the Λόγος, who is the "effulgence of the glory, the very image of the substance" of God.

"The Word was God." In the revelation of these words is found the essential, because the Divine, informing reason of scientific inquiry and knowledge; they are the guarantee that those who seek may find the working out of a Divine process in language and literature and history;

or, again, that the insight of metaphysical thought is a Divine insight into the character of existence. Though there be ten thousand distinguishable branches of thought or knowledge, yet all forms of thought or knowledge meet in this, that they are all Divine, and their Divineness is the ultimate truth of them all.

They all are Divine. Again, this attribute of Divineness is no mere abstraction, no neutral or dead word. Word, Wisdom, Reason, Λόγος—it is the expression of the life of God. The God whom it expresses is alive, is reality of being, is life; is all that our dim consciousness of being, of personality, really means. Our reason is reasonable; our character is moral; our personality is personal, is free—just so far as each truly reflects what personality, character, wisdom are in Him, the expression of whose living Personality they are.

There is, then, a sense in which theology is quite literally the *Scientia Scientiarum*, as actually including every thought that is true. Nevertheless, most knowledge is not approached from the side of theology; and there are reasons, no doubt, why it is, at the least, convenient that it should be so. Indeed, though all scientific methods presuppose the unity of reason—a postulate which belongs immediately to metaphysic, and ultimately to theology—for all ordinary purposes the scientific method stands in contrast against the theological. The scientific method

of knowledge, while it implicitly takes for granted the whole rational process and machinery alike of our own minds, and (I must add) of the universe which it explores, finds much of its robust strength in the explicit refusal to take for granted, in any other direction, either specific facts or interpretations of the meaning of facts.

So splendid have been the achievements of this method, that we are accustomed to meet, and need to be on our guard against, not merely a claim for the acceptance of scientific results within their own sphere, but (what is more formidable) a claim that the scientific canons and methods of thought, and the hypotheses upon which they work, are the only canons and hypotheses upon which knowledge can be based. We are met, I say, by such a claim. Often, perhaps, it would be more accurate to say that, without the formulation of any such claim, we are met by a widespread instinct, more imperious still because more unconscious of condition or limit, that all thought or knowledge whatever must work upon these assumptions and methods only. Of the assumptions I have, so far, already spoken. Mind is assumed, within and without, everywhere; and character, so far at least as it is indispensable for the discipline and working of mind. But while the existence of truth is so far assumed, the content of truth is not. Rather it is as the primary condition of the scientific method to assume nothing as true beyond the fact of truth and mind

itself. The building up of knowledge is a gradual and progressive achievement. Mind feels its way by patient observation and reflection everywhere. Its method is hypothetical, tentative, inductive. It is a process of perpetual evolution, of endless advance, magnificent indeed in actual results, yet such as can hardly be thought of except as a finite advance towards a total practically, for us, infinite. Moreover, in most branches of knowledge, even the truths that are most definitely ascertained are still, in a certain sense, tentative. The most dogmatic principles are acquired principles, inductively built up; and however little we can practically believe that future discoveries of truth could qualify, or, by dwarfing, seem to supersede them, such a contingency is never, at least in the abstract, inconceivable; nor would it, if realised, contradict or overthrow, but rather enrich the more, the whole fabric of knowledge.

Is it true, then, that assumptions or canons of thought, based upon the experience of acquisition of knowledge such as this, can be transferred into the sphere of distinctive theology and found to work livingly or fruitfully there?

No doubt it is perfectly possible, in reference to the subject-matter and history of religion, to construct a scientific inquiry of a strictly inductive kind. It is possible to inquire into the origin and development of the religious sense; into the history and phenomena of religious beliefs; into the consequences, as observable in character and

life (so far as these things can be observed from without), which are, or seem to be, the outcome of different forms and developments of creed. The mental attitude necessary for such a study as this may be, in strict accordance with the assumptions and canons of scientific thought, an attitude of perfectly impartial equilibrium—convinced, indeed, that truth of some kind will be ultimately evolved from the careful study of religious phenomena, but unbiassed by any personal religious loyalty ; and rather assuming that truth, if found among practical religious societies, must be found as distributed somewhere amongst them all, and likely to be at once most seriously endangered by the surrender of complete allegiance to any.

Upon a study, such as this, of creeds, or types of character as moulded by creeds, upon the assumption on the part of the student—at least for his scientific purposes as student—of a stringent mental neutrality, I make no other comment for the present but this, that whatever its place or value may be in the intellectual life of the community, or of individuals, it has at all events hardly anything, if anything, in common with the study of Christian theology. I do not disparage its use, or in many cases its necessity. Nevertheless, it could only be by some confusion of thought that a study such as this could be ranged under the heading of theology. It can only become theology when the entire Christian

hypothesis, and with it all idea or hope of the possibility of any theology properly so called, has first been explicitly laid aside.

For Christian theology differs from such a study as this, not accidentally, but fundamentally; differs in its hypotheses, in the character of its certainties, and therefore in the nature of its canons, and the direction of its processes, of thought. If the scientific method is inductive and evolutionary, Christian theology is characteristically deductive: that is to say, it is based fundamentally not so much upon a gradual edifice of religious ideas, a process of tentative conjectures, more or less satisfactorily verified in experience, whilst, bit by bit, they slowly advance towards some far-off goal of remote theological certainty; but rather upon the actual manifestation of a historic life, accepted as Divine. Whatever may have led up to this acceptance in the history of the individual, theology begins as theology from the acceptance of this life as a Divine revelation; and its central work consists in the exploration and appreciation of the consequences, not to the intellect only, but to the entire character, which flow out from such acceptance. Theology, however minutely she may explore and verify it, does not set out, with blank mind, to make discovery of this fact, or of the essential interpretation of it. It is from this fact, and from the Divine interpretation of it, that theology starts. It is upon this that theology, as such, is based.

Now, to say this does not mean that theology is out of relation with the inductive achievements of *a priori* reason. On the contrary, the main fact and character of these is taken for granted, as the necessary substructure and preliminary to theology. As it was not, historically, until after the work of Greek thought and Hebrew discipline of character that God was revealed in Christ; so, intellectually, is it always true that Christian theology does not set aside, but rather postulates and assumes the preliminary work of reason—its inherent interrogativeness, its demands, enigmas, efforts, and (so far as it has reached them) achievements. Theology, as a system of thought addressed to the reason, presupposes the conditions, the necessities, and the struggles of reason as unillumined by revelation. Nor are the processes of reason checked in the least, but stimulated and fortified in the light of this revelation. The revelation itself is not the revelation of a dead text, but of a living Person,—a revelation as multiform, as inexhaustible, as life. Still, whatever the Christian theologian may have to say—and he has doubtless much—about the relation of reason to theology, it remains fundamentally true that the basis and certainty of his theological work rests not so much upon the interrogation of inductive experience as upon the acceptance and study of a revealed Life.

To him, indeed, the very antithesis will ultimately be a formal rather than a real one. To

him it is clear that the work of preliminary reason only finds its verification and completeness, as its otherwise insoluble problems only find their solution, in the theology which flows out from the acceptance of the revealed Life. Still, his basis is the revelation even more than the induction: and so far, in scientific theology, the process of other study seems to be reversed. It follows that, as judged from the point of view of secular science, the methods and hypotheses of theology must appear sometimes anomalous.

Theology, as a system of intellectual thought, if wholly apart from revelation, would be at its best of the nature of metaphysic—an attempt to build up conviction as to the ultimate meaning of life and consciousness from the various data which experience supplies; but chiefly from the interrogation of the phenomenon of consciousness itself—and its character, and the postulates which are involved in it. For this must always be the primary—nay, in some sense (however largely interpreted by history or science) the all-inclusive, the ultimate as well as the primary—datum of those who fain would know the source and the goal, the meaning and character, the value and destiny, of the life of man's conscious spirit. Now, no one who honestly, however externally, studies Christianity, can fail to see that for the Christian intellect the conditions of this explanation are transformed by the revealed Life. If that, the fundamental Christian hypothesis, is

true, thought hangs no longer helpless in mid-air. There is at once a real source and goal. The exemplar, the ideal, *exists,* at once of human reason and of moral character; —and of both at once because of either; and of both not as really two, but rather as inseparable aspects of one. It exists—nay, it is the reality of existence.

And as to the meaning of the ideal exemplar, which is the all-inclusive reality; the Incarnate Life by what it reveals and involves of the Being of God,—the essential unity, yet threefoldness in unity, of mutually inclusive personalities, the inherent self-relatedness in eternal Being,—becomes itself, even on the side of mere intellect, however much not discoverable, nay, even (if you will) imperfectly apprehensible by mere intellect, yet becomes the solution of the hitherto insoluble enigmas, the crowning and perfecting of the insight, nay, of the very capacity, of intellect. The Christian theologian cannot but claim, not only that his illuminative revelation is in most perfect accord with reason's reasonableness, but, moreover, that reason itself has never found its own reasonable vindication or completeness elsewhere; that, so far from stultifying or superseding reason, it alone lifts reason up to the true level of reason's own highest independence or capacity as reason.

If, then, the theologian's attitude or method is different, perhaps even anomalous, from the point of view of the assumptions and hypotheses

of the scientific mind, ordinarily so called, it can never be true to the theologian that theological truth, because based upon revelation, and therefore in its characteristic method deductive, is, intellectually speaking, on a lower or less rational level than the truths of inductive exploration. On the contrary, to him it is reason which is instantly hemmed in and fettered in its capacity, whenever, whether in the name of reason or on any other ground, it shuts out the hypothesis of revelation, and endeavours to struggle with the complexity of life and thought alone. Reason, taken apart as reason, is reason by hypothesis dwarfed. Intellect really isolated can, in fact, apprehend nothing, except so far as there are propositions quite exclusively intellectual. But no truth that is not narrowed down by artificial abstraction is an exclusively intellectual truth, and, apart from the region of abstractions, isolated intellect is intellect incapacitated. If mere intellect cannot thrill to the bracing joy of moral effort or victory; cannot put meaning into the overshadowing conscience of sin, or the new dawning of life in the sense of pardon, acceptance, sanctification; cannot enter at all into the wonders of the consciousness of loving and being loved; it is assuredly true that intellect, taken apart as intellect, is without the very capacities of consciousness by which *the intellect of the spiritual consciousness* sees and knows. But it is in this insight of the intellect of the spiritual

consciousness that alone mere intellect rests from its weary round of Tantalus' labours, and finds itself not quenched, discouraged, superseded, but satisfied, illuminated, reconciled; its old efforts after truth all included, its old antinomies harmonised, its old aspirations glorified, its old impossibilities melted away.

You remember the mathematical puzzle of the race between the hare and the tortoise—the hare which ran ten yards while the tortoise ran one; the tortoise which nevertheless, *usque ad infinitum*, was always one-tenth of its old distance ahead, as often as ever the hare had cancelled the former arrears. As in that puzzle, by the abstract and arbitrary hypothesis of an infinite subdivision, the possibility of which was hypothetical and abstract only, the intellect was (as it were) walled in, and could never get outside the artificial limitation of a hypothesis purely imaginary; so reason, regarded as the reason of a being only rational, and not recognising yet that its own highest possibilities as reason belong to it only as it is the reason of a moral consciousness, nay, of a spiritual personality, is retained in the old circle of barrenness and hopelessness by the artificial hypothesis, the unreal abstraction, which would separate off the reason as a non-moral, non-spiritual thing; and so, by the attempt to regard reason merely as rational, stunt all the highest capacities of reason itself.

But to return from what is in part a digression,

though hardly an unimportant one, as to what reason is from the point of view of revelation. If the basis of theology be the revelation of a Person, whose Personality is a revelation of God : if therein all the old processes and problems of reason go on, not checked, but taken up, steadied, completed, crowned in the light that flows from the revelation ; and the scrutiny, meanwhile, of the truths or aspects of truth, which do follow from acceptance of the revelation, is in its character, as I have urged, a deductive more than an inductive scrutiny : it will follow that theology, if it is to be theology at all, if it is not to abandon its own characteristic being, and throwing the revealed Life to the winds, to become once more a metaphysical speculation, or further still from its own essential nature, a mere inquiry, intellectually impartial, because morally and spiritually uninformed, into the phenomena and history of religious creeds and societies, must be built upon a hypothesis of certain truth : and as possessing, and based upon, definite truths, must have, at the core of its life, such a reality as the old word orthodoxy represents. There must be such a thing as an orthodoxy if there is to be a theology. However difficult it may seem to be to determine what is orthodox, whatever confusion may have arisen amid diverse judgments embodied in diverse societies : whatever *excuse* there may therefore be for the easy assumption of external criticism, that an orthodoxy must be a narrowness and an error in

itself: it remains true, after all, that theology without a deposit of truth, without therefore some data of definite creed in reference to which individual judgments may differ as orthodox from heterodox, as true from determinably false, would be not theology at all, but a sea once more of endless speculation, on which Reason, not exalted but degraded, as well as disabled, by setting out alone, would toss and wander, compassless and rudderless, in eternal and pathetic impotence of effort. It is only so far as bodies of men can agree upon the contents of an orthodoxy, that it is possible for them to share in a theology. If different bodies hopelessly disagree, they can, indeed, have their diverse theologies, corresponding to their diverse views of orthodoxy, but they can have no common content of theology. Nor can those claim a theology at all to whom the word orthodoxy has no meaning. Herein is a contrast, characteristic and fundamental, between the conditions, necessary from the very outset, for theology, or for other fields of speculation and knowledge, viewed apart from theology—a contrast which issues directly from the fact that the basis of any Christian theology is in the revelation of a Personal Life, accepted as Divine.

So far I have tried, however imperfectly, to enlarge upon what is really one single thought only, the character of Christian theology as based upon revelation rather than induction. But there are other thoughts which I should desire at least

to mention along with this. The very phrase, "revelation of a Personal Life," carries us really much further. For a person can only be known by personal intimacy and interchange. Only a person can know a person; and the knowledge of a person can never be a knowledge merely intellectual. As a living person could not really be intelligible to mind divorced from moral character, but community of life and experience and affection is, through avenues conscious or unconscious, the method of realising personal knowledge; so Christian theology, being what it is in fact, the knowledge of a personality revealed in human life, cannot, in the nature of its own essential being, be ever adequately measured or appraised by the comparative method, from without. An impartial science of comparative religions, so far from rising intellectually beyond it, or above it, necessarily falls back—as from the moral so from the intellectual conditions, which are indispensable for capacity of understanding it. It is, of inexorable necessity, only from within, only by intercourse of personal affection and communion, that its revelation can be, in any real measure, intelligible. But I do not attempt to dwell further upon a thought which has been so strikingly interpreted from this pulpit not many months since.

To some extent I have dwelt already upon the thought that the highest truth would not be apprehensible by mere intellect, even if there

were, or could be, such a thing as intellect abstracted from content of personal character. Nowhere is this truth so clear, nowhere is the inadequacy of pure intellect, even for intelligence, so conspicuous as in the subject-matter of theology. I suppose it is universally true that there is as truly character in intellect, as intellect in character; but what is elsewhere discernible, just perhaps indicatively, is true with overwhelming directness here. It is the long discipline of the moral character by which the eyes of the understanding are opened. I said just now that theology must have an orthodoxy. Of course I do not deny that there is an orthodoxy which is blind, conceited, unintelligent; the substitute of indolence or cowardice for intelligence and honesty. But possession, real and intelligent, of spiritual truth, is as plainly a moral as an intellectual thing. It is only by moral affinity, real likeness of moral character in the apprehending intelligence, that moral truth can be really apprehended. It is only by that deeper spiritual reality of which moral consciousness is the immediate expression, which itself is the origin and root, the key and the crown of moral consciousness, that truths which transcend the conditions of present existence, or seem at first sight to contradict common logic; truths such as Atonement or moral reality of effectual pardon; truths such as Regeneration, or Sacramental feeding on the Body and Blood of a Divine Humanity; truths

such as Resurrection, or Eternity of being; cease to be, as at first sight they seemed to be, meaningless nonsense, and become in very deed, to the soul, illuminating and transforming, transcendent and eternal, realities.

It is correspondingly, on the other hand, the penalty of aspirations after spiritualism, which are not the crown and perfecting of moral experience, to stand self-condemned as both intellectual and moral rubbish.

True theological apprehension postulates not the ingenious exercise of a single faculty, but the allegiance of the whole man. Nay, there is often more theological insight in moral dutifulness, though it seem unintellectual, than in the most ingenious hypotheses of an intelligence which seems to be independent, because it is deficient in moral dutifulness.

Again, as nowhere else is the inadequacy of the intellect so conspicuous if abstracted from the total of the intelligent person, so nowhere else is the individual personality so inadequate if taken apart from the community. As reason, for us, is *without* each apprehending intellect before it is *within* it, and the life of humanity precedes that of our own several human experience, and the capacities as well as rights of the individual are in large measure what his membership of a society has made them; so Christian theology is for men as joint members of a Catholic Church. If on the one hand, it is true and strikingly true,

that theological insight, like all other Divine insight into knowledge and character, comes to the corporate body through the inspired mind and life of individuals, it is none the less true that the individual mind or conscience apprehends, and acquires apprehensiveness, in and through both the moral discipline of gregarious life, and the intellectual dutifulness of lowly Church membership. True theological insight can never be the pride of individual ingenuity. Theology always has been as a historical fact—must we not add, theology by its inherent necessity always must be?—the theology of a coherent corporate body, the illuminative knowledge and light of a Church.

So incompatible with the true insight of theology is the secret lust after intellectual eminence or independency, that it has been, in all ages of the Church, an experience characteristic at once and most pitiful, that those who seemed, it may be, in all other respects, both of intellect and character, the most richly qualified to interpret Divine truths to men, yet warped, a little and a little, by a vein of individual ambition of intellect, where there should have been loyal and lowly dutifulness, have after all been eminent only to mislead and to perplex, to distract and to divide, the minds and hearts of their brethren. Again and again this one failing has availed to turn what should have been the very light of heaven into the misleading lanterns of the marsh

and the wilderness. Though Divine insight be through individuals, it is never as an individual property. Nothing could be more anomalous than an esoteric Christian theology, the secret intellectual pride of a few; and nothing is more pitiful than the spectacle of the shipwreck of theologians in whose theological intelligence the element was lacking of dutiful loyalty. Divine truth is the animating possession of a corporate Church; and the man who sets himself apart from the Body loses the inner touch of the life which illuminates and informs the members of the Body. We have known it in ancient history. We know it only too familiarly in modern Europe. If independence is, in one sense, a necessary note of intellectual as of moral strength, in a sense that is but slightly perverted it is the characteristic snare and ruin of intellectual people. To be independent, if dutifulness demands it, is the very test of strength. But a vein of desire for independence of intellect is already the beginning of dissolution. The solidarity of humanity, the deep interdependence of man with man, the inadequacy, nay, the disaster of the individual, if taken apart as a solitary being, when he was made for orderly membership in a mighty living and life-giving whole—if it is sufficiently noticeable elsewhere, is nowhere more conspicuously or peremptorily true than it is in the study of Christian theology.

What then? Are thoughts like these thoughts

of discouragement more than of inspiration? or are they in any way far-fetched, or uncertain, or unnecessary? "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." If the opening verses of St. John be not folly, but Divine insight, how can Christian theology be less than (in proportion as it is realised) a positive certainty, a communing of the illumined soul with truth? Do not, then, be misled into vainly imagining that theology can be either constructed or maintained on the basis of wide information about opinion, as distinguished from dutiful submission to the truth as true. Do not be taken in by the shallow fancy that mental indifference is higher intellectually than surrender, independence than devotion, or that the *rôle* of all-tolerating indifference is possible to the Christian theologian. Devotion to the truth is not lowered or fettered because it sets out with the most immovable certainty that its own quest is neither quixotic nor indefinite—that the truth *is,* is reality of existence, is perfection of life; life in whose realised completeness, intellectual wisdom, personal goodness, the boundlessness of spiritual capacity, are no longer even imaginably separate; they are aspects of a unity which is each one of them simultaneously, perfectly; they can differ only as diverse manifestations of a Being essentially One.

Again, if the Word be God, how could devotion to that Word be the devotion only of a single faculty of man's being, and that neither the high-

est element in his being, nor that which is most characteristically himself? How could devotion be devotion, if it were of the intellect more than of the character and the will? But if theological truth thus necessarily makes its demand upon the whole man, it also exalts the whole man. Every faculty that it uses, it braces and purifies. If the inadequacy of an isolated faculty, as intellect, is nowhere so conspicuous; nowhere, on the other hand, is the intellect so refined and perfected as intellect, as here where it begins to be identified with the moral conscience, while it abdicates every dream of individual eminence for ever, in loyal submission to the eternal lordship of a Living and Loving Truth.

Again, it hardly even seems an addition to these thoughts, so much is it implied in them already, that theology throws a man back upon his fellows; its insight is only possible to those who, as brethren amongst brethren, have learnt the discipline of a life of love. It requires a lowliness of intellect as well as of action; the lowliness of the man who, though he thinks, and prays, and learns, and judges for himself, yet does so with even increasing distrust of his separate sufficiency; whose insight into real good gives him keen conscience of moral imperfectness; whose conscience of moral imperfectness makes intellectual self-assertion impossible; who would be not elated but dismayed to find himself moving towards apparent contradiction—I will not say necessarily of the majority

of surrounding Churchmen, but of that Apostolic and Catholic Church in whose Divine foundation and guidance he believes.

Only one word more. On such a representation as I have endeavoured to make, you may tell me that it is difficult indeed to search and find, here or there, some one or another who can with any confidence be said to deserve the name of theologian. I know not. Something indeed there was said about things hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes: something also about the relative order of the first and the last. God's verdict is not always as man's; and true inward affinity with the highest truth is often growing on by silent degrees, even, it may be, where, or how, men suspect it least. Meanwhile I can but reply that the very fact of the rarity, if rarity it be, bears, in its own way, witness to the transcendent reality of theological truth.

# A RELIGIOUS VIEW OF HUMAN PERSONALITY

(A sermon preached before the University of Oxford on October 26th, 1902.)

"*For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself*" (St. John v. 26).

ARE these words spoken primarily of the Logos—the eternally pre-existent Image of the Father, or primarily of the Son Incarnate, the human revelation of God? I must venture to think that all words spoken by the Christ in flesh of Himself the speaker, must have direct reference to the *Incarnate* Christ; and that these words are no exception to the rule. Such a view is emphasised by the phrase with which, in the next verse, the sentence concludes, "And He gave Him authority to execute judgement, *because He is the Son of man.*"

I venture, then, to take the words as having reference—not exclusive, perhaps, but direct—to *human* being in the Person of Christ. But if to human being in the Person of Christ, then, in some sense at least, to the consummation, and therefore to the ideal, of what human being is. I do not stay now to ask in what precise way the

relation ought to be stated between humanity in us and Humanity in Him. At the very least, there is an instructive analogy between the two; so that what is a leading principle of humanity in Him has in it a lesson about *our* humanity, and for us. At some risk, then, of seeming abruptness, I must venture to begin by assuming that the words of the text have a direct application to humanity, even our humanity, in its true ideal meaning, as designed and discerned by God.

Any such *a priori* assumption is greatly strengthened when we begin to observe what it is that the words assert. They assert two things, and the two make a paradox; for they seem, on the face of it, to contradict each other. "Even so gave He to the Son also"—it is, then, a gift, derivative and dependent. "To have life in Himself—as the Father hath life in Himself": it is, then, an inherent possession, and compared, in this point of its inherency, to the inherency of the life of God. It is Life—at once given *and* inherent: at once dependent *and* distinct: at once at outcome of the Father's being, an act or expression of the Father's love, *and* an existence over against the Father, like in sovereign self-completeness to the Father's own. Such a paradox contains, in fact, an exactly true account of the actual reality, or at least the full ideal reality, of human conscious being.

The two sides are both present together, and

the two sides are both to be taken account of. Logic may, or may not, succeed in correlating them : but to ignore either is to fly in the face of experience. It is easy for thought so to emphasise either side of the reality as to exclude the other altogether. It is easy to think of the inherent possession as everything. It is easy to see nothing, as characteristic of man's conscious selfhood, except the independence ; to find its whole *differentia* in distinctness ; to imagine that separateness is the great reality. One man is distinct from another : and both are distinct from God. I am what I am apart, alone ; for good or for evil an object, a centre, and a goal, to myself. Now no doubt very much of *prima facie* consciousness is like this. And no doubt also this sense of self-sufficing independence may be said to have been closely connected, as condition, with not a little of human enterprise and of human excellence.

On the other hand it is not difficult, nor unnatural, at least to reflective thought, to conceive of created consciousness as a mere mode or part of universal consciousness, of the particular as but a partial presentment, a rendering in detail, of the general purpose or mind, of man at his most as a mere element in God. This is the opposite extreme. So far from finding the whole *differentia* of particular being in distinctness, it really breaks down all distinction whatever. It explains the wonder of created personality quite

simply by explaining it away. It merges the individual in the absolute. Whether, on those terms, it would ultimately succeed in conserving any conception of personality at all, even as applied to God, is a question which we need not now ask. Human personality it certainly does not conserve. No doubt it has been at many times usual for thinkers to conceive of personal consciousness, for all purposes, in terms too exclusively of conscious intelligence—of thought, that is, rather than affection, of mind rather than will. Now it is much easier to think of the particular mind than of the particular will as a mere part or reproduction of the universal. It was therefore perhaps no very unnatural result of this exclusive over-emphasis upon thought or intelligence, if men were unduly disposed to let the idea of real individuality go: or at least if they found themselves in some intellectual difficulty, when they tried to show that their system of thought would not end in the loss of it.

These are the two extremes. But in point of fact either of these by itself is really one-sided. It may be easier, no doubt, as far as simplicity goes, to adopt either view by itself than to bring the two into harmony. But it would be (what is often tempting to the thinker) a simplicity purchased at the cost of truth. A truer fidelity to experience would make impossible the exclusion or exclusive adoption of either. The logical dilemma is here, as it is so often, out of

place. Each may have, indeed, in some sort to be explained by the other. But the reality, on the one side, of individuality distinct and inherent, and on the other, of fundamental union with, and dependence on, God,—seeing that both are certainly, in some sense, true—cannot constitute any real or final antithesis.

It is to be noticed that they seemed most opposed to each other in the earlier and more imperfect stages of consciousness; the consciousness, that is, of children; or of many, it may also be, of us, who are apt to remain as children in things like these. We seem to begin with feeling ourselves wholly by ourselves and to ourselves. This life within—with its capacities, and its aims, its records, and its hopes,—it is all *my* secret. I know: and no other knows or can know but I. If there be risk run, it is my risk. If there be achievement, it is my achievement. If there be weakness or wrong, it is alone, it is apart, it is mine, only mine. This sovereign separateness is the very essence and prerogative of my being.

How different from this is the later consciousness—especially of the noblest and the holiest of men! If we look to the picture of them, as it has been again and again unfolded to us—behold! there are no secrets jealously shut off; but rather every inmost motive and thought laid bare. There is the growing sense of an eye which sees and has seen through every secretest

veil ; of a power which has guarded and guards every step of the path ; of a wisdom which has revealed itself to and in the soul with consummate wisdom of patience ; of a power and a love, not originated from within, which have more and more made the consciousness of the very self what it has been, and is, and is capable of becoming. Till the end is at least a conscious approximation towards real union of thought and of spirit—the man characterised through and through by the reality of the indwelling Spirit of God.

Such union is not for a moment the dissolution but the consummation, not the merging but the crowning, of the several self. Never is the man so perfect in insight and wisdom as when he sees as God sees, and knows according to the truth itself : never is the man so perfectly free as when he can will and does will in absolute accord with the meaning and will of God, which is the highest harmony and perfectness of the nature, made in God's image, which God has bestowed upon him : never is he, as self, so completely all that self had meant, or been, or aspired to mean or become, as when he is at last a conscious and living and willing and joyous reflection of the very being and character of God.

It is true of course that this is transcendently beyond what any man has realised in his experience here and now on earth. The best man,

perhaps, has but glimpses—and his glimpses, though real, may be fitful and overcrowded—even of what he himself really is, and is to be. But it is true also that this is the end towards which the experience of saints is, even visibly, tending in present experience: saintliness is, even here and now, however incompletely, a growth towards the capacity of real mirroring, through God's gift of power, of the character of God. And it is at the same time true that it is in the final end or goal, it is in the consummation, unattained, indeed, yet more or less certainly discerned—it is not in the essential imperfectness of its first, weak rudiments—that we shall rightly distinguish the real *differentia* and the true definition of the conscious selfhood of man.

No doubt our language, at its best necessarily figurative, may sometimes, and to some minds or in some parts, obscure the truth which it can but roughly represent. We may speak, as St. Paul spoke, of created human being as, in its ultimate reality, "reflecting, as a mirror, the glory of the Lord";[1] but reflection and mirror are metaphors which require to be guarded very carefully. So if we speak of human being as an echo, or a likeness, a reproduction, or an image, or a response; our best words not only say at most but a part of the truth, but with that part they are apt to say also, verbally at least, something else which is not quite true. Take such words, for instance, as

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

"reflection" or "response." We need to make quite clear to our thought the contrast between an active and a passive reflection, between a living and a dead response. The response we speak of must be one of living will: the reflection we mean must be an activity of willing love. Our words will fail at the pinch, unless these things, will, love, life, are found to be implied within the words.

But, if we think, we shall find that they are so implied. There is a sense, indeed, in which all created being is a reflection of something of the Being of God. The snowflake and the crystal have the impress of Him: they are a real part of His revelation. So, in other ways, are the sunset, and the thunder. So, in other ways, are the unconscious growth of an infant, or the instincts of animals, or the motions of the stars. Something there is—a real being, a real beauty, which is *given* to them: which is stamped on them: a stamp, a gift, from the beauty of the Being of God. But there is in them no inherent life. There is expression, Divine expression, *through* them: and yet it is not really *they* who express. They? There is no real "they." They are but channels, methods, fragments, glimpses, through which God indicates some separate aspect or detail of the expression of Himself.

How far different is it with the living self of man! It is the prerogative of his created being to have a life which, though none the less abso-

lutely given, is yet given as inherent, when given. It is the true meaning of man's nature not only passively to reflect, as a mirror, some fragment of God's being; not only metaphorically to respond to some isolated attribute of God; but to be a living image—radiating as He radiates: willing as He wills: loving as He loves: nay, even willing with His will, and loving with His love, animated by His Spirit, and radiating the very glory of His Person: a response to His essential being; a reflection of His inmost character: a living image of His very self. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God: and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is. And everyone that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. . . . And he that keepeth His commandments abideth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us."[1]

The reflection of the crystal and the snowflake is partial, is passive, is dead. But the reflection of will as will, of life as life, of character as character, of love as love, of sovereign personal being as personal and as sovereign: this cannot

[1] 1 John iii. 1–3 and 24.

be less than personality—royally complete in love and character, in life and reason and will. These are the very things in respect of which man is, in his ideal, the living image, the response to the being, the mirror of the glory, of God. As response, the response would fail, as reflection, the reflection would be untrue, if it did not necessarily contain and imply the livingness of these things.

The union with God, for which man yearns, and which is the consummation and ideal meaning of man's being, is no mere selfless merging in the Divine. The goal of man's being is union, not extinction. "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one"[1]; this is the crowning of the perfectness, it is not the obliteration, of man. Merge man's selfhood in the Being of God, make him a mere part or mode of absolute existence; and it would be idle to talk of either reflection or response. The very words necessarily imply such living distinctness as is essential to the possibility of communion and unity. Oneness of Spirit is not mere unity of number. There can be no reality of communion, there can be no living oneness, in simple identity. "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself." The ideal goal of man's being is life, a life inherent, with inherency like to the inherency of the life of God: for to image God, to reflect His

[1] John xvii. 23.

very being, is the ideal end, which is the real meaning, of man. There would be no living reflection, no radiating, no willing, no intelligence even, if the individual were absorbed within, were a mere part or aspect of, one divinely self-conscious whole.

And yet all this inherency upon which we insist, is itself, as we no less insist, essentially givenness. It is derived, relative, dependent, creaturely. It is not—cannot be—apart, either by itself, or for itself, any more than it is from itself. Its whole excellency depends upon its relativity, upon its reality of communion, upon its oneness of thought, will, love, with God who is its goal as truly as He is its source. It is self, not maintaining its selfhood by separateness, or by the possibility of separating, but rather perfected in the final surrender of all that tends really to separate, glorified in the attainment of a union never again to be impaired or qualified, at rest in perfect harmony with Wisdom and Righteousness and Love, at rest, in oneness of Spirit, in Christ and in God.

In God because in Christ. What is there in the ideal Christian consciousness which is not, to a St. Paul or to a St. John, *in Christ?* The directness of the phrase may stagger us. We may set ourselves to soften it; we may explain what it actually says away: but however we deal with it mentally, we cannot deny that it pervades

the thought of the New Testament, and pervades it in this form.

The phrase must needs be the right phrase. But how much does the phrase mean? The question is sometimes raised—and it is at least a legitimate, if it is hardly an illuminating, question—whether created persons are to be conceived of as within God, or without? Is God limited by them? Is their being an addition to the Being of God? and does the addition constitute some existence, besides God, which is not God? The question is a question of logic rather than of reality; a question, that is, not so much of what *is*, as of what human distinctions, of thought and of phrase, are subtle enough to define.

In the light of what has already been said I hope that we shall recognise that there is something really artificial in a question like this; artificial, that is, in the antithesis which it implies, and upon which it depends. But if the question be raised, then neither the simple "yes" nor the simple "no,"—neither the simple "within" nor the simple "without"—is wholly true as answer without the other. If there is indeed a sense in which created persons are without, yet almost all that is ordinarily meant by that withoutness is in fact a departure from the true law of their being, and is therefore no part of the ideal truth. If there is assuredly a sense in which they are within, that withinness, even in its ideal consummation, leaves them not the less, but so

much really the more, self-identical as themselves. There is indeed a true sense in which it may be said of us all, from the beginning, that we are within God: for "in Him," as St. Paul preached to the Athenians, "in Him we live, and move, and have our being."[1] But the truth here expressed is but shadowy, incomplete, unrealised, when compared with that to which St. Paul looked forward as the far-off ideal, the perfectness which shall be consummated at last—"when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all."[2]

Are created persons an addition to God's being, so that His being can be said to be limited—limited by what they are? In so far as they can be said to be an addition at all, they are certainly an addition which can be said to utter and so to enrich, to express, and to glorify by expressing, rather than in any sense to limit Him. Limitation of God? It would be far nearer to the truth to conceive of them as constituting a new outpouring and enrichment of Divine self-expression through the willing and living reality of selves—of Him, by Him, and unto Him,—of selves whose meaning and whose glory it is—each in his several part, or aspect, or quality,—to image faithfully, and to make adequate response to, the very character and reality of His being.

[1] Acts xvii. 28. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

It is indeed only too true that though, in Divine idea, and in dim underlying possibility, men may be, from the first, within God; there is in them also that which tends to withoutness, and does set them without and apart in some painfully real measure of experience, in proportion as they have rebelled, and have identified themselves with sin. Sin is, in its essence, withoutness. We all, who know what sin is, have some dim instinct at least as to what such withoutness means. And the tendency of sin, progressive and habitual, is towards that consummated separation from the being and nature of God, which is spiritual death. But the sense of withoutness, with which our self-consciousness begins, and which sin terribly accents and tends to make more and more real, is no proper reality—it is rather the contradiction of the proper reality—of what human life means. Only sin is the real withoutness. Very different from this is that element of withoutness (if so it is to be called) or quasi-withoutness, that negation of mere self-destroying identity, that gift of inherency of being, which gives meaning and life to unity. If men's first rudimentary and most imperfect experience lays a wholly undue emphasis on their separate distinctness, as distinctively separating, yet on the other hand, as men grow in divineness of character, and learn more and more how the true meaning of their being is to be One in the Oneness of the Spirit of God; more and more

obvious is the sense in which they are not without, but are within, Him—"their life is hid with Christ in God."[1] They are without just so far as to be really—that is, livingly and lovingly —within. They are without in the sense that they are not self-identical with Him. They are not God, that their surrender, through Him, to union with Him, may be real. They are within more vitally by far than without: yet with a withinness, no doubt, of which a sort of without-ness—the distinction which makes mutually conscious relation possible, the distinction implied in every real unity of Spirit,—is itself a necessary aspect or condition.

If there is difficulty in this, the difficulty lies in the application of logical distinctions and dilemmas to the complex simplicity of life. Logic fits perfectly only to things which human thought can wholly analyse and comprehend. Very rarely can human thought so compass (as it were) all round as to comprehend and formulate wholly anything so fundamental as conscious life —uncreated or even created. But whatever the difficulty of statement may be, to experience at least the reality, if complex, is not perplexing nor difficult at all. Experience knows that both sides of the truth are true, whether logical forms can correlate them fully or no. It would not be after all very profoundly philosophical to explain away either side of a complex experience

[1] Col. iii. 3.

because it seems hard to adjust it logically with the other.

Christian life, then, our own life, our life in this University, or elsewhere,—is it pitched high enough? Its view of itself, its aspirations for itself, the meaning of its own work, the upshot of its own being,—do they not fall continually below the dignity which is inherently theirs? Men feel sometimes the significance and the solemnity of dying: do they feel the intense solemnity, the Divine significance, of living—of being men? Remember that it is not only immorality or wilful rebellion; it is not only religious indifference or contempt: but it is all pride and bitterness of spirit, or levity of life, or idleness, or unworthy conversation and amusement, it is every form of self-concentration or self-worship, which gives the lie to the true meaning and purpose of human life. In real right, and in real power, are we not more, far more, than we are willing to be? Is it hyperbole if St. Peter speaks of our becoming "partakers of the Divine nature"? Is St. John's conception of "fellowship with the Father" or of being "in Him that is true"—is our Lord's supreme teaching about inherence in Himself—so much high-flown and misleading metaphor? The real meaning of you is not to be found so much in your imperfect rudiments as in your ideal consummation; not in your worst, but in your best; or rather in that

transcendently better, which your best can as yet but faintly adumbrate. In the imperfect stages of human consciousness the meaning of created personality is obscured, and discernible only most imperfectly. In its consummation it is what only the Incarnate has revealed in Humanity: so that even the opening phrases of the Epistle to the Hebrews, or such words as I have taken for my text, are found at last to have a degree of relevance to it which at first we should never have even dared to dream.

This is the goal and the ideal. It may be that the method of reaching it has some sore surprises and perplexities. Of these we do not speak today. Discipline, Sacrifice, Crucifixion,—or, what may be even harder to understand,—confusion, conviction, even (as it seems) utter mental or spiritual overthrow; all these have a place, a strange place sometimes, even a staggering place, in the education of saints. Yet do not, even for these, lose the meaning, or lower the aim, of your own human being. It is hard, through gathering darkness, to keep the ideal very high. Yet in the height of the ideal, there is hope, and there is life. To be men is—as it seems—to be capable of suffering, of sorrow, of perplexity, of remorse, and of shame. Yet to be men *indeed*—is, after all, to be as gods; echoes of God; adequate responses to God; not illustrations only of some attribute of Divine power or beauty, but rather—alive with His life, and

aflame with the brightness of the Spirit of His love, and possessed through and through with the fire of adoration towards Him—light of His light, and fire of His fire, and righteous will of His righteous will!—real, personal, living reflections, or images, of Himself: of His character, and of His Being.

# THE FULHAM CONFERENCE ON COMMUNION WITH THE ATONEMENT

(*Journal of Theological Studies,* April, 1901.)

"THE occasion, the action, and the full words, of the Institution, all define the sacred Body in our Lord's thought to be the Body as in Death, and the sacred Blood to be the Blood as in Death; that is, as in the act and process of the One Sacrifice which is our Redemption. By the Body and the Blood I thus humbly understand to be 'signified' the Means of our Redemption—themselves belonging to the past, but in their redeeming Effect ever present."[1]

These are Dr. Moule's words, written very carefully beforehand for the Round Table Conference at Fulham. They represent a position very deliberately taken, and maintained as crucial, by the "Evangelical" representatives generally on that occasion. The same position was affirmed with the same emphasis and agreement at a discussion upon Eucharistic doctrine held a year or two ago at the annual Islington Conference. We may probably take it, at this moment, that the position stated is the fundamental basis of the

[1] *Report of a Conference held at Fulham Palace in October*, 1900, p. 29.

theological teaching, upon this particular subject, of our Evangelical friends. In the words of Mr. Dimock, "the *Res sacramenti* is not Christ as He now is, but Christ's Body and Blood as separated in Sacrificial Death for our sins."[1]

The words quoted from Dr. Moule so nearly express the very truth, that if we heard them for the first time without context or comment we might be inclined to welcome them as true. But the more we examine his position in full, and take it in all its context at Fulham and Islington, the more shall we feel that it just misses, after all, the very truth at which it aims; while in that margin of exaggeration, between the truth at which it aims and the thing which it actually says, there has crept in the beginning of a somewhat far-reaching misconception. But before commenting upon it, I may express something of my own satisfaction and thankfulness in finding that the difference in Eucharistic doctrine between High Churchmen and Evangelicals—between, that is, two classes of minds which differ in some real respects, but are apt to imagine their differences much greater than they really are—can be brought to a clear theological issue like this. Here is a question strictly theological; a question which can be argued dispassionately, and, if need be, at patient length; a question outside the turmoil of party cries, or the heat of party feeling. We shall learn to be grateful for

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

the Fulham Conference, if for nothing else, yet for this, that it has brought clearly to light a quiet theological issue upon which, nevertheless, a very large part of the whole great controversy rests.

And I should like also to acknowledge from the beginning that the position which is thus cardinal to modern Evangelical theology is in its origin neither new nor partisan. A doctrine strenuously maintained as cardinal to Eucharistic truth by Archdeacon Freeman and by Canon Trevor, based by both upon emphatic words of Bishop Andrewes,[1] and by Canon Trevor upon a long catena of passages from distinctive and distinguished Anglican divines, is no device of modern "Low Churchmanship." It has a long history, and many-sided support. It is no more partisan than it is new. Those who think that there is in it, nevertheless, a core of mistake, will not only have to show their own grounds of principle against it, but will also have to account for the large amount of apparent historical consensus which can be urged on its behalf.

With this prelude I pass at once to the consideration of certain objections to the doctrine.

I. First I would urge that this doctrine, if pressed, is open to one of the objections which we have been in the habit of making—and

[1] See Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service,* vol. ii. p. 209, ed. 1873 (chap. i. end of § 12), and Trevor's *Catholic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist,* p. 176.

making, as I believe, truly and rightly—against transubstantiation: namely, that it introduces a new and unnecessary miracle. Christ was—but is not—dead. His Body as dead, His Blood as separated in death, are not, anyhow or anywhere, now. It is obvious to urge that the gift given in the Sacrament is what is, and not what is not. There is no *cadaver*. There is no blood of a corpse. In whatever sense the bread and wine either represent, or are, or so represent that they may be said to be, certain realities beyond themselves, they at all events are, or represent, realities —things existent, not non-existent. There is indeed a "Christ who died": but there is no "dead Christ." Now the answer, if I understand it, on this particular point, appeals really to the Divine power of making a past moment present. I am not sure whether it would be right to apply to this point Mr. Dimock's quotation from Ridley on a cognate point, that it "could only be effected by the 'omnipotency of Christ's Word.'"[1] But I have no doubt that this is the meaning of Bishop Andrewes, where he says, "By the incomprehensible power of His eternal Spirit, not He alone, but He as at the very act of His offering is made present to us."[2] "He at the very act of His offering" clearly means, to Andrewes, Christ dying on Cavalry, not Christ, risen and

[1] *Fulham Conference*, pp. 48, 49.

[2] *Sermons of the Resurrection*, preached on Easter Day, vii. (*Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology: Andrewes' Sermons*, vol. ii. [1841] p. 302).

ascended, presenting the blood of His sacrifice in the Holy of Holies: and he conceives this perpetual reidentification of the Church with the moment of Calvary—this reproduction of a point in the past as present—to be an act of the "incomprehensible power of Christ's Eternal Spirit." I shall have by and by to point out that if, by whatever exercise of miraculous power, this precise point of the past were reproduced as present, it would *not* be the moment, after all, of the consummation of the sacrifice. It would be, on the contrary, a moment in the process, a moment indeed of transcendent importance, but still a moment at which, if you could indeed break off there, the sacrifice would be still not fully consummated. But my present point is that whether that moment is the moment of consummated sacrifice or no, in asking to have it reproduced by "incomprehensible power" as present, you are asking in fact for a miraculous inversion of realities.

I do not say that Mr. Dimock would allow this. On the contrary, I rather think his language is intended to avoid it. He says, of the *res significatae*—that is, the dead body, and the separated blood—that they are "thus verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful, being really present for the manducation of faith, 'cui praesentia sunt omnia praeterita'"; and again he claims that "there was no novelty in maintaining that things of the *past* may be things *present to*

*faith.*"[1] I think, perhaps, this "presence to faith" is meant to be conceived of as a mode of presence expressly not miraculous, but normal.

Now, I pass by the point which Canon Gore made as to the whole sentence of Rupert of Deutz[2] from which Mr. Dimock quoted a phrase; for I am more concerned with Mr. Dimock's meaning than with Rupert's. Mr. Dimock then, at all events, puts it as a general principle, that things past may be present to faith. In what sense may they? I quite understand their being present to memory, or to imagination; both of which, it is to be observed, imply that whatever kind of reality may be asserted of the presence, the absence is comparably *more* real than the presence; the presence is only a sort of quasi-presence, or substitute for presence, of the really absent; but it is plain, I suppose, that Mr. Dimock's "presence to faith" means something more than the imagination or memory. He puts it as a normal principle, of universal application. To faith "omnia praeterita" are present. Are they? I must venture to challenge the principle in this form. If in any sense "all things" are present to faith, assuredly they are not all present in the same sense; and directly you begin to discriminate, the principle as principle is gone. It is no longer a property of faith to make all things present. But you have to ask what that property is, in some things which causes them to

[1] *Fulham Conference*, pp. 48, 49. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

be, and in other things which causes them not to be, present eternally to the faculty which can discern them as present.

For it is important to observe that faith is not a cause of existence. It does not make things to be when they are not. It is rather a power of corresponding with what is. It sees what cannot be seen, it realises what cannot be realised, save by special capacity. But it does not invent, or create, what is not. It is true that there is a sense in which things may be said not to be, except to the capacity for discerning them. As there is no light save to the seeing eye, nor harmony save to the ear that is capable of music, nor spiritual discernment save to spirit : so Divine things, save to faith, may be said not to be, in the same sense in which it is true that a poem is not a poem to the fire that burns it, or to the animal that tears it to pieces. But the man who rescues the poem and apprehends it, does not, by apprehending, make it. When these various things *are,* to faith, it is not faith which is the cause, or author, of their being. The musician hears, as the eye sees, what *is.* And faith receiving and discerning what, save to faith, is not, does not create, but discerns what it receives, and both receives and discerns only what is.

Only that, then, can be present to faith which is present really ; that is, which is present to God. Is it true to say that to God "praesentia sunt omnia praeterita" ? I must submit that it is

not true. Some things are eternal presents as others are not. It is true indeed that all accomplished facts tend to be, in their measure, an element in the abiding present. But some are so very faintly; some very mightily; and some can cease to be so altogether. And since they can cease to be so, the presentness is not an inherent, or universal, property of the past.

It is the haunting terror of conscious sin that it is contained within the present self. It is the inherent presentness of the past which is naturally its sting, or its power. But there is such a thing as consummated redemption, consummated forgiveness, consummated beatitude. There is such a thing as a real elimination and undoing of the past. The fact is that some past things are present in a sense in which others are not. *Cui praesentia sunt omnia praeterita* is misleading. Abraham's call, Abraham's faith, are they, in the sight of the Eternal, eternal predicates, eternal truths of Abraham? I can well suppose that they are. Is the treachery of Judas an eternal reality? Our hearts may say μὴ γένοιτο, while we dare not, even for that, usurp the seat of the Judge. Is "slainness" an eternal attribute of Christ? Emphatically it is. From the foundation of the world, and to eternity, He is the "Lamb as it had been slain." Not by an act of miraculous reproduction of a single point in the unfinished record of the past; but inherently, because He is what He is, therefore His fact of death

is an eternal attribute, an inherent and inalienable present. Not that He is always in the present dying, or in the present dead; not that sometimes, or often, His moment of dying is by God's power reproduced, or recalled; but that it always is an indivisible part of what He is, and He, apart from it, would be less than Himself. Here is an instance indeed, without special miracle, yet as a property of God, in which "praesens est, usque ad aeternum, id quod est praeteritum."

But is St. Peter for ever lying, or for ever a liar? Is the moment of his betrayal—is the moment of every Christian's fall and sin—alike part of God's eternal present? Emphatically it is not. Else were the Cross a failure after all, and real sanctification a delusion. I will not try to elaborate this further. To say that a certain past act is of such character as to constitute an eternal attribute, predicate, or property, is one thing. To say that a certain point in a past process is by God's power miraculously reproduced, to say that the perfect wholeness of a consummated work can be so (as it were) rolled back, that men can be set by God's power at a special moment when the work was prepared and waiting to be consummated eternally, is another. The one is to conceive of Christ's death, as I believe that Scripture conceives of it, as an eternal element or attribute, inseparable from what Christ is. The other is to bring back the actual moment of Christ's dying—itself a point

(albeit a transcendent point) in the work as yet unconsummated and uncrowned—to bring it back, unnaturally and unnecessarily, by a divine act of "incomprehensible power," into the midst of the perpetual present.

II. The second objection I would urge is one which was explicitly made at Fulham. It is that the doctrine makes an unreal distinction between the sacrificed and the glorified Body: as though there were two Bodies of Christ, when there is but one. The sacrificed is the glorified Body, and the glorified Body is the sacrificed. It is the distinctive glory of the glorified Body that it is the Body of sacrifice. The slainness is not a mere past fact, which is naturally ever more remote but supernaturally resuscitated into the present. The slainness is an eternal fact; an essential—for the purpose we may even say *the* essential—element and character of the eternal present. To me it seems essential to theological truth to insist upon the indivisible oneness of the Body. It is as the characteristic attribute of the glorified Christ that His sacrificial death is present eternally: not as an undoing of the glory; a going back into the desolateness of the past; a cutting of the redemptive work of Christ into halves; a stopping short (*per impossibile*) in the moment of the blackness. It was never a dead Christ, as dead, but a Christ who could not be holden of death; it was a Christ who died and lived through dying; a Christ who by dying

conquered death; a Christ not *νεκρός* but *ὁ ζῶν, καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρός, καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶν εἰμὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*: it was such a Christ, and as such, who triumphed and who atoned, not in, but through, death. I would fully adopt on this point the words of Canon Gore, as given in the report: "He could not separate the sacrificed from the glorified Body of our Saviour, and could not conceive of our partaking of the former except through the latter. The latter, he urged, is the only Body now existing, or that ever has existed; and it is the same Body which, once in a crucified, is now in a glorified state."[1] I would add only the reminder that even the two states must not be so contrasted as to seem to be mutually exclusive; that as the crucified state was itself a mode or condition of the glory, so the "glorified state" does not by antithesis exclude, but rather includes, and is based on, and is characterised by, the inalienable fact of "crucifiedness."

A reply on this point was attempted by Chancellor Smith,[2] which seems to me to involve a good deal of misconception. There must, he seems to argue, be some such dualism as is implied in the antithesis between the crucified and the glorified Body of our Lord, because, at the institution, Jesus in bodily form, and the bread and wine which He gave as His Body and Blood, were separately present, side by side with each other. In what sense does Chancellor Smith

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 51. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

suppose that the bread and wine, at the last supper, *were* the Body and Blood of Christ? And were they the crucified or the glorified Body? If the crucified Body by antithesis against the glorified, then, in whatever sense of the word "were," they were the same Body as the Body which handled and delivered them. This may possibly raise some question about the word "were"; but if both "were" the same Body of crucifixion, what becomes of the necessary antithesis between the crucified and the glorified Body? The very fact that the bread and wine could really "be" that which, in an obvious sense, at the very same moment they were not, is (to say the least) a strong suggestion in the direction rather of identification across apparent antithesis, than of antithesis breaking up identity. On the other hand, if they were the glorified Body, what would become of the whole argument for the sake of which the antithesis is desired? The only remaining alternative, that the palpable Body of Jesus which went that night through the agony, and through the crucifixion next day, was itself the glorified in contrast with the crucified Body, could of course not even be suggested.

On the face of it, then, this answer does not appear to be very formidable, or to shake our position when we maintain that there neither are, nor were, two Bodies of Christ; but that the crucified Body is glorified because crucified, and that the glorified Body is, both now and for ever,

essentially characterised as crucified. Would you find the crucified Body? Do not go back and peep into the tomb. Behold it! alive and glorified for ever! "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen."[1] The crucified Body is on the throne of God.

I do not care, then, to adopt exactly the sentence with which Canon Gore first raised this question at the Conference.[2] I do not suppose, in the light of his words which I quoted just now, that he would himself regard it as theologically felicitous, though it effectually served to raise his point. Neither "the crucified Body directly and the glorified Body consequentially," nor "the glorified Body directly and the crucified Body consequentially," seem to me quite happy or quite true phrases.[3] Our communion in the Eucharist is communion with, or of, the Body of Christ *which is*. And the Body of Christ is the crucified Body glorified. We are made partakers, in the Eucharist, of humanity sinless and glorified; but sinless through sacrifice, and glorified by that victory over death which could only have been won through dying. But Chancellor Smith's answer suggests, no doubt, a deeper point than this comparatively superficial argument. And this leads us naturally on to, and will arise naturally under, the third of the

[1] Luc. xxiv. 5, 6. [2] *Fulham Conference*, p. 44.

[3] Compare the clear statements made by Canon Gore in *The Body of Christ*, pp. 61, 62, 66, 94, etc.

principles which I had desired to advance. It is this.

III. It seems to me clear, as I have tried to set forth with greater fulness elsewhere, that every reality in the Church of Christ, is in Spirit, spiritual. Pentecost is the extension and the perpetuation of the real meaning and power of the Incarnation. And the Spirit of Pentecost constitutes the Church what it is. The Church may fall short, in all directions, of her own ideal meaning. But in her own ideal meaning, the Church *is* the Spirit; and the ordinances of the Church are what they are of, and by, Spirit. "Ecclesia proprie et principaliter ipse est Spiritus." This is true, broadly, of the ideal meaning of the Church as a whole. It is true distinctively of the Church's distinctive principle and experience—the feeding upon the Body and Blood of Christ. It is the Ascension—and that which the Ascension implies—which is the key to the truly spiritual understanding of spiritual things. "Doth this offend you? What and if ye should see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life."[1]

Nothing, then, in the Church of Christ has its own real meaning or being, save in and through Pentecost. It is within the sphere of Spirit, and

[1] Jo. vi. 61–3.

by the power of Spirit,—and it is not except by, and within, Spirit—that the Communion really is what the Communion really is. What is pre-Pentecostal is preparatory merely. It had the form, the organs, the discipline; but not yet the full living spiritual essence. It was necessary that one mode of Christ's presence should be withdrawn, before the second—which was the real object and climax of the first—could be made a living reality. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."[1]

As the Church, as Church, was called and shaped and welded and instructed and disciplined by the Incarnate Christ, yet was not, as Church, alive till the Breath of Christ—till Christ as Breath—was breathed into it, and it lived by His life, now become its own; as the Apostles of Christ were personally called and trained and fitted to be Apostles before the Ascension, and yet were not really what the word "Apostles of Christ" properly connotes till the Spirit of Christ possessed them (the Simon Bar-Jonah who denied the Lord, though by a more than possible use of language he can be said to be, yet was not, for all purposes, to quite strict thought, the Apostle St. Peter): so the last Supper, as instituted on the night before the Crucifixion, was not yet

[1] Jo. xvi. 7.

actually all that the Christian Eucharist—which nevertheless it was, and which was it—was to be in the Church of Christ.

This is a principle as to the necessary truth of which I feel very strongly; and yet it is one against which I should anticipate very earnest protest. Do you venture, it will be asked, even to suggest that the Supper as instituted—as celebrated—by Christ Himself, was in any respect other, or less, than that Christian Eucharist, whose highest conceivable perfection it would be, to be exactly what Christ's Supper was? It is indeed the highest conceivable perfection of the Christian Eucharist to be what Christ's Supper both ordained and signified. But why must it have had, at that moment of its preliminary institution for the life of the Church, all that inner essence which belongs to it as within the sphere of the life of the Church, which is the enabling Spirit of Pentecost? Does any principle of reverence for the word of Christ preclude us from believing that the Church first became what the Church means: that the Apostles first were really Apostles indeed: that the breathing of Christ upon them for the power of remitting or retaining sins sprang to its essential fulness of living power: and that the institution of the Last Supper became alive with all its inherent spiritual reality; at the moment when the consummation of God's work as Incarnate, through the crowning of the Ascension and the entry in glory into the

Holy of Holies, first made possible—as He Himself had taught before—His return, as Spirit, to be the Breath and Life, the vital essence and reality, of His Church, and of all that His Church meant and was?

Christ, as Incarnate, condescended to a world of before and after. It was part of this condescension to the natural limitations and distinctions of before and after, that the Birth, the Life, the Death, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Spiritual Indwelling, became so many separate and contrasted moments. It was incidental to this condescension, that He prepared and ordained beforehand what was to have its full life afterwards: that He in bodily presence, before His death, instituted an ordinance whose whole vital significance depended not only upon the accomplishment of His death, which was not then, even as death, accomplished, but also upon the triumphant character of His death; upon the fact that His death was not death only, not death so much as the destruction of death; upon the fact that His death was but a stage, or mode, of eternally victorious life. Had the death ended in death, it would not have had the significance, or the power, which the institution (itself prior to the death) implied. In any case the institution precedes that which gives it its significance. Why should it not be recognised at once that that after-reality which gave it its significance was itself still incomplete, till the (yet future) Resurrec-

tion as well as the (yet future) Death—till the Ascension as well as the Resurrection—had been consummated? In the picture of Christ, handling with His Body the elements which He delivers as His Body, we are really to recognise not a distinctness of two Divine Bodies, but the simple truth that in a world of before and after, He ordains beforehand, and in palpable form, that whose full significance implies, and depends upon, and so far waits for, the things which are to follow, and are impalpable.

To take the ordinance which is most vitally distinctive of the life of the Pentecostal Church, outside the region of the Pentecostal Church: to say that it is, or that it ever was, what it essentially is, otherwise than precisely within the sphere, and by virtue of the efficiency, of the Pentecostal Spirit, seems to me to be, in fact, a form of materialism; a substitution of the dead for the living, of the mechanical for the vital; an abandonment (at the central point) of the distinctively spiritual character of the Church and her ministries and sacraments.

Any real union and communion of our real selves can only be, not with dead symbols as dead, but with the living Christ, the redemption and perfection of humanity. Any real union and communion with humanity as perfected in Christ can only be by Spirit, of Spirit, in Spirit. The material, the symbolic, are vehicles—are means—of this. But to make the material or the symbolic in

any way a substitute for this ; a truth more primary or more real than this ; a reality from which communion of Spirit ("that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us") follows only as a secondary sequel, or inferential corollary : this, so far as it goes, seems to me to be an obscuring of the spiritual—which is the real—truth ; a materialising of the spiritual—which is the highest—reality.

All these three points which I have urged seem to me to be real and weighty, and to be suggestive of much beyond what I have been able to say. I do believe that the doctrine in question assumes a superfluous miracle ; that it distinguishes Christ's sacrificed and Christ's glorified Body as two bodies ; and that it takes the most characteristic experience of the Pentecostal Church—in the teeth of our Lord's direct words in St. John vi—outside the sphere of the Pentecostal Spirit, in and by which alone I believe it to be what it is. And I believe these objections to be really invincible. And yet after all it is not, I think, mainly upon these that the controversy as to the truth or falsehood of the doctrine will turn. It is really knit closely up with a certain form of the doctrine of the Atonement ; and with that, in the long run, I believe that it will stand or fall.

Now it is precisely here, as I conceive, that we really touch one or two questions which are, to the whole matter, cardinal. It is here that we

touch the real animating motive of the whole Evangelical contention. It is here also that we find the key to the real meaning of the Anglican language quoted by Canon Trevor; and learn at once, both what it really means, and wherein what it really means is, or may be, in part misrepresented by the form of language in which it is often conveyed.

IV. The animating motive in the whole Evangelical contention is, I believe, the instinct, strong and clear, that the Eucharist immediately connects us *with the atoning sacrifice of Christ*—with the Blood of the Atonement, with the Body that died. This causes an instinctive protest against any Eucharistic theory which would connect us, in communion, with something other than atoning sacrifice—with something that may seem (as it were) to shirk atoning sacrifice—with glory merely as glory, with bliss as bliss. Now with this instinct, and this protest, I desire to associate myself without reserve. I would say, as strongly as Dr. Moule, or Mr. Dimock, or Dr. Wace could say it, that it is with nothing so much as the sacrifice as sacrifice, the atonement as atonement, that the Eucharist was ordained to associate us.

If I were asked whether I believed the union of the communicant to be primarily with Christ in glory as victorious or primarily with the Blood of the Atonement, I should utterly protest against the antithesis, as in itself misleading and

untrue. But if you *press* anyone to choose between two things as alternatives which are not alternatives and cannot be separated, it is a matter largely of temperament, or of mood, which of the two will at a given moment appear to be the more primary or vital. It is to me quite certain that I could not choose or mean, by the *res significata*, anything which was not itself, in its most essential being, the Body and Blood *of the atoning sacrifice*. We do *not* mean any substitution of fruition *instead of* sacrifice, of blissful presence *instead of* atoning blood. But then it is no less clear to me that I cannot be made one with the Body and Blood of the atoning sacrifice in any way that is at all distinguishable from that living identification of the spirit of the self, through Spirit, and in Spirit, with the Spirit of the Christ, who was sacrificed and triumphant through sacrifice; which, however inconceivable to my natural self, is, none the less, my only possibility or hope—the presence of me in Christ, and of Christ in me.

For such reasons I cannot but think that Dr. Robertson's summary of the first discussion at Fulham, if correctly reported, was unfortunate,[1] though both Dr. Moule and Canon Newbolt are said to have concurred. "The question is," so the summary runs, "whether the virtue of the Sacrament depends upon our receiving the benefits of Christ's passion (*a*) by commemora-

[1] *Fulham Conference*, p. 47.

tion of His death, or (*b*) by union with His living Body." To this I object, first, that the alternative is not an alternative; and secondly, that whilst each of the two phrases is true, and each, for its truth, requires the truth of the other, neither of them hits the true point quite fully. For "union with His living Body" does not make explicit reference to His death. It would characterise the truth more precisely to say "union with His Body that died." But then "His Body that died" would emphatically mean "that died and is alive." We are made partakers of His Body ὡς ἐσφαγμένον. So far I agree with my whole heart. It is the very core of the truth. But ὡς νεκρόν? Most emphatically not.

With much, then, of the Evangelical meaning I can heartily concur. When Dr. Wace[1] says that "the Holy Communion is a commemoration, as well on the part of God, by whom it was instituted, as on the part of man, of the one sufficient sacrifice offered by our Lord on the Cross, and a visible means for assuring and conveying to us the benefits of that sacrifice," I could accept his saying, not indeed without some added explanation, but without the alteration of a word. When Mr. Dimock[2] urges the extreme importance of "bearing witness to the truth, that for outcast lost sinners, there was no access to life in communion with God, save by the reconciliation which we have by the death of

[1] *Fulham Conference*, p. 38. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

His Son—no way of entering into fellowship with the resurrection life of Christ except by being made partakers of His Body and Blood, as sacrificed for the remission of sins," I am, so far as these words go, with him altogether. Even when Dr. Moule[1] urges that it is "involved in the terms of institution that our Lord put forward His Body and Blood as sacrificed—the Body as dead, and the Blood as shed—to be participated in as a sacrifice," I could still adopt the words, if only I may put my own interpretation on "dead"; making it clear that I mean the Body which died and is not dead, not the Body in a state of death; and again, that by the "Blood as shed" I mean really the "shed Blood," not the Blood as now in a state of separation from the Body.

I know of course that against this there will be urged, first, the fact, so often supposed to be symbolic, that the bread and the cup are separately consecrated and received; and secondly, the present tenses in the words of institution (if, or so far as, they are genuine)—the *διδόμενον*, *κλώμενον*, and *ἐκχυνόμενον*.

As to the first of these, I would answer, with all reverence, that if bread and wine are to be consecrated to represent Christ's Body and Blood, the symbol cannot, save in very general outline (as it were), represent the thing symbolised. Bread and wine do not naturally com-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

bine into a single entity : and the soaking of the bread in the wine, which is the one method of combination, would produce a form of unity singularly unlike the unity which (it is implied) would have symbolised Christ as alive. Blood contained in body, not body steeped in blood, is the natural condition of material life. If bread and wine are to represent body and blood, it seems to me so far the more natural thing that they should represent them severally, rather than in a forced combination, which would fail symbolically, that I cannot admit that the fact that they represent them severally, rather than by an artificial commixture, carries us exegetically any way at all towards determining that they represent them in a state of death. Moreover, it is, after all, not so much in a state of material life *before* death, as in a state of spiritual life *through* death, a state of which "having died" is an eternal predicate, that I conceive the bread and wine as representing them. So far as the symbolism of the separateness of the elements is conceived of merely as reminding us that the Body and Blood are not as in the ordinary condition of material life, but are those which died and, through death, are alive, I of course should have no ground for demurring to it. But it seems to me in any case clear that a precise detail of symbolism of this kind must be ruled by what we believe to be the true, revealed, and experienced doctrine of the Eucharist : not that our concep-

tion of the doctrine of the Eucharist can be shaped or ruled by it. So far as the bread and wine represent the Body and Blood in some reference to death, just so far there will be, in the suggested symbolism, an element of truth. But the suggested symbolism is far too uncertain to determine for us the precise truth of the doctrine.

In reply to any argument from the present participles, I would ask on what conceivable hypothesis they could have been otherwise than in the present tense, while Christ was still on the way to Calvary? From the point of view of the eve of the awful sacrifice they were inevitably —as inevitably upon my hypothesis as upon Mr. Dimock's—the Body that *was being* broken, the Blood that *was being* poured out. But from the point of view of the Pentecostal Church the sacrifice is already fully consummated: and the Body and Blood are, therefore, whatever they are in, and in view of, the consummation of the sacrifice. The tense is the one thing which cannot be simply carried over to the Pentecostal Church. If, as tense, it is strictly true in the Pentecostal Church, this must be shown on weightier grounds of its own. It certainly does not follow as an inference from the fact that on the night before His death Christ spoke of His sacrifice as being still in process, and incomplete.

I return, then, from argumeuts like these, to the more central question of doctrine. This

question I have already raised as a question between ἐσφαγμένον and νεκρόν. *Need* the truth, or *can* the truth, which is expressed in the words ὡς ἐσφαγμένον, be translated into the form ὡς νεκρόν, as though ὡς νεκρόν were an equivalent phrase? My contention is that it neither *need* nor *can*.

But the transition is one which can be made very easily, very imperceptibly. And it is precisely this transition which seems to me to have been made—without any consciousness that there was a transition—by certain Anglican divines, whose language is now insisted upon as cardinal to the Evangelical exposition of the Eucharist. Let me try first to exhibit the fact, and then to explain the meaning and moral of the fact.

No one does it more completely, not to say brusquely, than Bishop Andrewes. The passage quoted is from the seventh of the sermons preached on Easter Day upon the resurrection.[1] Now, in this sermon, it seems to me plain that the really underlying object is (as I said of the modern Evangelicals) to insist upon the direct connexion of the Eucharist with the atoning sacrifice of Christ. When he writes: "It is not mental thinking, or verbal speaking, there must be actually somewhat done to celebrate this memory. That done to the holy symbols that was done to Him, to His Body and His Blood in the Passover; break the one, pour out the other,

[1] *Sermons of the Resurrection*, vii. (*Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology: Andrewes' Sermons*, vol. ii. pp. 300–2).

to represent κλώμενον, how His sacred Body was 'broken,' and ἐκχυνόμενον, how His precious Blood was 'shed.' And in *corpus fractum* and *sanguis fusus* there is *immolatus*": I do not really need to critcise a word; though I would remark, in parenthesis, that the process of "outpouring" has never been, in fact, so prominent a ceremony in the consecration of the Eucharist as some of the language often used on this subject would appear to imply. But Bishop Andrewes does not draw the distinction which I have asked for between, on the one hand, the Blood in its character as having been shed, and so as directly representing the Life which died, and in its aspect as having both died, and atoned by living through death; and on the other the Blood conceived of as stopping short and remaining in a state of death. Nor is Bishop Andrewes the man to refrain from expressing his thought in the most pungently epigrammatic form: while even in a Bishop Andrewes it remains that pungent epigram is apt to be theologically perilous. It is tempting, no doubt, to culminate in a biting phrase. But biting phrases, as such, are apt to lack somewhat of the delicacy of truth. I submit, then, that it is exactly the exaggeration of his true insistence when he reaches the climax of his paragraph in the word *cadaver*. "If an host could be turned into Him now glorified as He is, it would not serve; Christ offered is it—thither we must

look. To the Serpent lift up, thither we must repair, even *ad cadaver;* we must *hoc facere*, do that is then done. So, and no otherwise, is this *epulare* to be conceived."

In the paragraph which leads up to this climax the sentence which seems to me to be most argumentative asserts that Christ "as now He is, glorified, is not, cannot be, *immolatus*, for He is immortal and impassible." It is true, of course, that Christ cannot now a second time go through mortal sufferings. It is true, of course, that He is not, and cannot be, *immolandus*. But I should have supposed that if there was one proposition more certainly true than another, it is that Christ as He now is, glorified, both is, and shall be for ever, *immolatus*—τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου[1]—ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων, καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, ἀρνίον ἑστηκὸς ὡς ἐσφαγμένον, ἔχων κέρατα ἑπτὰ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς ἑπτά, οἵ εἰσι τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ Θεοῦ.[2]

Besides Andrewes, Canon Trevor quotes some five-and-twenty other Anglican writers, of more or less imposing authority, upon the same side. They include Laud and Lake, Bramhall and Jeremy Taylor, Patrick and Dale and Waterland, and many others. As was to be expected (if I have been even approximately right in my statement of the case, and of the slurred distinction), many of the passages quoted by Canon Trevor would fall in as well with my view of the truth

[1] Apoc. xiii. 8. [2] Apoc. v. 6.

as with his own. I will quote just three. Thus when Jeremy Taylor says: "It is but an imperfect conception of the mystery to say, it is the Sacrament of Christ's Body only, or His Blood; but it is, *ex parte rei*, a sacrament of the death of His Body, and, to us, a participation or an exhibition of it, as it became beneficial to us, that is, as it was crucified, as it was our sacrifice. And this is so wholly agreeable to the nature of the thing, and the order of the words, and the body of the circumstances, that it is next to that which is evident in itself, and needs no further light but the considering the words and the design of the institution"[1]: it seems to me that what Jeremy Taylor claims as "next to self-evident" is *not* (as Canon Trevor seems to say) the proposition that the Body and Blood are received "as in a state of death," but (as I have said) that they are the shed Blood, and the Body sacrificed—which is not the same thing. So, again, either side of the controversy might equally receive the words of Bishop Bull, when he says: "In the holy Eucharist, therefore, we set before God the bread and wine as 'figures or images of the precious Blood of Christ shed for us, and of His precious Body' (they are the very words of the Clementine Liturgy), and plead to God the merit of His Son's sacrifice once offered on the Cross for us sinners, and in this sacrament represented; beseeching Him, for the

[1] *Real Presence*, vii. 7 (*Works*, ed. Heber, ix. 494).

sake thereof, to bestow His heavenly blessings on us."[1] Or of Waterland, when he says: "The Apostle's account of it is briefly expressed, in its being a communion of Christ's Body and Blood; that is to say, of the Body considered as broken, and of the Blood considered as shed; as is very plain from the terms of the Institution."[2]

In saying this, however, I do not mean to deny that, as a whole, the writers quoted do certainly tend, with more or with less distinctness, to shape their thought and language on the subject in the same direction as that of Bishop Andrewes; or to assert that any of them draws the precise distinction which seems to me so important.[3]

[1] Bishop Bull's *Works* (ed. Dr. Burton), vol. ii. p. 252.

[2] Waterland, *Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, ch. viii. *ad init.* (*Works*, ed. 1823, vii. 199; ed. 1843, iv. 613). Waterland's statements on the next page, however, are quite unequivocally on Canon Trevor's side.

[3] There is, no doubt, a tendency in some of these writers to regard their special doctrine of the Eucharist as a bulwark against Rome. Unfortunately, its controversial aspect, as against Rome, seems to be connected with just its own most doubtful elements. Thus, there is first a natural and legitimate prominence given to the word "commemoratio" as used of the Sacrament. Then "memory" is contrasted with "presence," and emphasised *as the contradictory of* presence. Men's minds are influenced, more or less definitely, by the idea which Bishop Ridley had expressed in the form of a quasi-scientific maxim, "Commemoratio non est rei praesentis sed praeteritae et absentis" (*Works of Bishop Ridley*, Parker Society, Cambridge, 1843: see the *Disputation at Oxford*, pp. 199, 442).

As a result of this (more than questionable) corollary from the word ἀνάμνησις, it becomes not only permissible, but a positive principle, of value for its own sake, to maintain that nothing is, or can be, the "res significata" except what is plainly "absens et praeterita." What is signified in the Eucharist *must be* something which, having no existence, cannot possibly be, in any real sense, present.

It is on the basis of such a process of thought as this that an argument like that of Bishop Lake becomes clearly intelligible (as quoted by Canon Trevor, p. 183), when he complains that "the Church of Rome, not

So far as they tend to insist upon the *res significata* as dead, I should certainly suggest that their tendency is not that of the language of patristic or liturgical devotion. It would be well if someone who has knowledge would furnish adequate evidence on this point. I have but glanced at Dr. Pusey's volume,[1] and gleaned, almost at random, a few phrases. Yet even

distinguishing between Christ crucified and glorified, or rather not building their conclusion answerable to this undeniable principle—the sacraments represent Christ crucified, not glorified—are driven to coin so many new articles: 1. of real presence corporal; 2. of a metaphysical transubstantiation; 3. of an ill-applied concomitancy. All which easily vanish, if we consider Christ's purpose to represent Himself in the Sacrament, not as He is now, at the right hand of God, but as He was, upon the Cross. Not but it is the same Body and Blood which is in glory, but it must not be so considered as it is in glory. Which will necessarily enforce us to acknowledge that the union between the thing earthly and the thing heavenly can be no more than sacramental, and that respective also to what was done on earth, not what is in heaven; was, I say, done *formaliter* on the Cross, but is effective, working in heaven."

It seems to be assumed that, if the elements signified anything which existed anywhere at all, questions on the subject of "presence" might arise, which are happily excluded so long as the "res" is, by abstract necessity, absent save only in the way of memory or effect. The worship of the Church on earth is not, even ideally, *identified with* the worship of heaven. It is a symbol, from which "reality" is absent *ex hypothesi*.

All this, though it can hardly stand as patristic or permanent theology, is at least more consistent than Canon Trevor's own position appears to be. Somewhat strangely, in criticising Johnson's "unbloody sacrifice," he complains (*Catholic Doctrine*, p. 208) that, "like the Romanists, he confounded presence with *existence*. Because the Body and Blood no longer *exist* in the condition represented in the Eucharist, he argues that they cannot be so *present*. Just so the Romanist argues conversely, that because Christ is present in the use, the elements are His Body in the condition now existing." Whatever may be said for or against Bishop Lake's position, it is certainly hard to follow Canon Trevor's. A man must feel himself very cogently bound, by other considerations, to maintain the reality of "presence," before he would call it a confusion of thought to assume that that which is "present" must "exist"!

[1] *The Doctrine of the Real Presence, as contained in the Fathers, &c.*

these seem to me to bear clear witness to a quite different strain of language and thought. It is not, of course, that people who hold with Mr. Dimock could not explain them, or would be at once refuted by them.[1] Yet I cannot imagine that anyone who ever dreamed of making a point of that of which our Evangelical theologians make a point, could have expressed his devotional feeling in such language as some of the following.

Thus the Eucharistic bread is entitled by *Ignatius*[2] the *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός.* "I am thy nourisher," says *Clement of Alexandria*, "who give thee myself as bread, of which whoso tasteth no more tasteth death, and who daily give thee the drink of immortality."[3] From *Eusebius* he quotes: "to eat the living bread, and His life-giving flesh, and to drink His saving Blood."[4] From *Julius Firmicus:* "Seek ye the grace of the immortal cup; in the heavenly food renew ye the lost man":[5] and again, "we drink the immortal Blood of Christ; to our blood is the Blood of Christ united." From

[1] any more than, e.g., Bishop Ridley; see *The Oxford Disputation* (as above), pp. 201, 202, and appendix i. p. 444.

[2] *ad Eph.* xx.

[3] *πόμα ἀθανασίας* (*Quis dives*, 23, p. 948, ed. Potter; p. 18, ed. Barnard).

[4] *in Ps.* xxxvi. 4, p. 149, ed. Montfaucon. The passage proceeds, *τούτοις τρυφόμενος καὶ πιαινόμενος, τῆς ἐνθέου μέθους ἀπολαύων 'κατατρύφησον τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ δώσει σοι τὰ αἰτήματα τῆς καρδίας σου.'*

[5] Salutaris cibi gratiam quaerite et inmortale poculum bibite . . . caelesti cibo renouate hominem perditum (*de Err. Prof. Relig.*, xviii. *fin*).

*Cyril of Jerusalem:* "That thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same Body and the same Blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are diffused through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, 'we become partakers of the Divine nature.'"[1]

From *Ephrem Syrus:* "Thou hast given me Thy Body to eat, and Thy living Blood to drink": and again, "From hateful desires free me, through Thy living Body which I have eaten": again, "Thy living Body and Thine atoning Blood which I have received from the hands of the priests": again, "Spare us who have eaten of Thy Body and drunk Thy living Blood": again, "Thy Body and Blood, as a pledge of life, are hidden in their members."[2]

From *Ambrose:* "This is the bread of life: whoso then eateth life cannot die. For how should *he* die whose food is life? how should *he* fail who hath a vital substance?[3] approach to Him and be satisfied, because He is bread; approach to Him and drink, because He is a fountain; approach to Him and be enlightened, because He is light; approach to Him and be

[1] *Lect.* xxii. (*Myst.* iv.) *ad init.*

[2] Dr. Pusey's references are *Paraen.* 11, p. 429; *ib.* 30, p. 480; *ib.* 31, p. 482; *ib.* 34, p. 487; *ib.* 73, p. 545. I have not been able to pursue them.

[3] quomodo deficiet qui habuerit uitalem substantiam (query, "who hath life in his substantial being")?

set free, because 'where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty'; approach to Him and be absolved, because He is the remission of sins. Ask ye who He is, hear Himself saying, 'I am the bread of life; whoso cometh to me shall not hunger, and whoso believeth in me shall never thirst.'"[1] Again, "In that sacrament Christ is, because it is the Body of Christ; it is not therefore bodily food, but spiritual. Wherefore also the apostle says of its type, Our fathers did eat spiritual food and drink spiritual drink; for the Body of God is a spiritual Body; the Body of Christ is the Body of the Divine Spirit; since Christ is Spirit, as we read, 'the Spirit before our face is Christ the Lord.'"[2]

From *Augustine:* "Let them then who eat, eat on; and them that drink, drink; let them hunger and thirst; eat Life, drink Life. That eating is to be refreshed; but thou art in such wise refreshed, that that whereby thou art refreshed faileth not. That drinking, what is it but to live? eat Life, drink Life; thou shalt have Life, and yet the Life is entire. But then this shall be, that is, the Body and Blood of Christ shall be, each man's Life, if what is taken in the sacrament visibly is, in the truth itself, eaten spiritually, drunk spiritually."[3]

Finally, from *Cyril of Alexandria:* "The Word, therefore, by having united unto Him-

[1] *in Ps.* cxviii *expositio, serm.* xviii. 28.
[2] *de Mysteriis,* ix. § 58. [3] *Serm.* cxxxi. § 1.

self that flesh which was subject unto death, as being God and Life, drove away from it corruption, and made it also to be the source of life, for such must the Body of (Him who is) the Life be." After quoting, like others, the passage from John vi about the living bread—ending with, "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me shall also live because of me"—Cyril goes on, "When, therefore, we eat the holy flesh of Christ, the Saviour of us all, and drink His precious Blood, we have Life in us, being made, as it were, one with Him, and possessing Him also in us." Again, "God, humbling Himself to our infirmities, infuses into the things set before us the power of life, and transforms them into the efficacy of His flesh, that we may have them for a life-giving participation, and that the Body of (Him who is the) Life may be found in us as a life-producing seed."[1]

But to return to Canon Trevor's Anglican authorities.

What is the explanation of the phenomenon? Or how can any one be acquitted of presumption —or worse—in suggesting that there can be anything, in such theologians as these, which can be in any way capable of correction?

The answer is that their mode of thought and phrase about the Eucharist, however (so to say)

[1] *Serm.* cxlii. (on Luc. xxii. 17–22). The translation from the Syriac in this case is Dr. Payne-Smith's, not Dr. Pusey's.

eucharistically correct, was coloured by their mode of conceiving the rationale of Atonement. Now, however audacious it may seem to criticise their precise phraseology about the Eucharist, I do not think it will be generally felt to be any such monstrous audacity to wish to modify some of the current phraseology of two centuries ago on the principle of Atonement. I do not believe that the truth about the Eucharist, as I am trying to represent it, differs in any single particular whatever from what these Anglican writers really meant. But I believe that they somewhat overstated what they really meant. They really meant to insist on the ὡς ἐσφαγμένον, and they allowed themselves, more or less explicitly, to put this as if it were correctly expressed by ὡς νεκρόν: not because their conception of the Eucharist, or its relation to Christ's sacrifice, was really different, but because they were accustomed to a mode of speech about the Sacrifice, as though it consisted simply of the fact of death as death, and therefore were for all purposes, and in all senses, fully consummated when Christ's Body was laid in the tomb on Good Friday evening.

Is this correct? Is the Sacrifice to be conceived as a single point only in the remote, and ever remoter, past? and not, as I think we should say, an eternal present? not indeed, as it were, generically, as though all pasts were present alike; but uniquely, in a sense in which no other past event is, quite as this is, inherent to

eternal being? Was the dead Christ, as dead, the consummated atonement of man with God? Which is the truer way of putting it: that Christ *is* our propitiation, or that something which Christ once did *was* our propitiation? Had He remained unrisen, unascended, unglorified, unpartaken of as living Spirit, would the fact that He was dead and done with have been our holiness? Was God pleased by His death, regarded, merely and finally, as death? I have no doubt that very much mediaeval phraseology, from the time, *at least*, of Anselm and onwards down to Dr. Dale, would fall in most naturally with such a mode of stating the theory as this. And if this language be accepted, then the distinction between ἐσφαγμένον and νεκρόν is merged: and the *ad cadaver* of Andrewes is fully justified.

Our first instincts do indeed not unnaturally tend to think of the sacrifice as identical with the suffering; to identify, in phrase and thought, sacrifice, as such, with that portion of the sacrifice which was painful and costly. But to think seriously that death, simply as death, ended the sacrifice, or struck the central note of what sacrifice meant, is to go against the emphatic teaching alike of the Old Testament and the New. This is to ignore the significance of the ritual of the Day of Atonement, and to represent, in very deed, that God was propitiated by penal suffering, as suffering; and that death, the death of His Son, was the thing which His Spirit desired.

It is to reject the conception that the death which atoned was not a death which was dead, but a death which by dying conquered and annihilated death. It was the *aliveness* through death; that is, not merely the fact of so holding on to life that death did not extinguish it, but more than this, the fact of achieving, through dying, the perfect fulness of life, which could only be achieved in the form of a life that had died and was *therefore* eternally alive; it was the presentation before God for ever of humanity through death victorious, through death alive, through death, in the consummation of penitence, sinless and glorified, with the glory of the Life of God; it was this, not the deadness of a corpse, which made the consummation of the sacrifice, and which constituted the life and holiness of man. And it is this death, not as stopping short in the state of death, but as the death of the eternally victorious, as the death of the eternally alive, with which the Church is for ever identified in, and by, living Spirit, in the Christian Eucharist.

It was the holiness of man—which involved penitential suffering—but it was the holiness, not the suffering; it was the life of man—which could only be through death—but it was the life, not the death; which the Spirit of God desired: not that it might *purchase* from Him, but because it *was*, the life and the holiness of man. The essence of the Divine Atonement consisted, not in the slaying of humanity, but in the presenting

of humanity—through death quite triumphantly holy and eternally alive—in the face of the all-holy God. Here is indeed an atonement. But death, as mere death, could be no "atonement" at all. And this "presenting" is not more vitally a past than it is a perpetual, an ever present, reality.

It may be that this point has been brought, in modern thought, into a prominence which it had not possessed for at least many centuries, though not greater than it had—shall I say in the Pentateuch, or in the Epistle to the Hebrews? I do not believe that it would have seemed in any respect strange to St. Athanasius or to the pre-Athanasian Church, while I believe it to be, on examination, absolutely required alike by the Old Testament and the New. Yet it is a point which I would venture to say was not in this form before Andrewes and his fellows; and which, though their words ignored it, they certainly never intended to deny. But I am at a loss to understand how any one could now read the eighth and ninth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews—after, say, the commentary of Bishop Westcott—without accepting at once, as true and as cardinal, this most scriptural, though not mediaeval, conception of the true rationale of sacrifice.

It would be too long to go into the whole matter thoroughly. But it may be well to refer to a few sentences of Bishop Westcott's which

have reference to the two thoughts (*a*) that "blood" does not signify "death" but "life," and (*b*) that the ritual of sacrifice culminated, not in the act of slaying, but in the presentation of the "life" which had been slain. We may express the thought by saying that the climax of sacrifice was the αἱματεκχυσία—not in the English sense of blood-shedding, i.e. killing, but in the Levitical sense of pouring out, or sprinkling, the blood (i.e. the death-consecrated *life*) in the Holy Presence. A very remarkable emphasis upon this doctrine is found in the words of Leviticus xvii. 11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." It is as certain as anything of that kind can be, that the mediaeval theology of the Atonement (from which we are by no means quite free as yet) would have expressed this last clause in exactly the opposite manner, viz. "for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the death." And here we have, as in a nutshell, the antithesis between the scriptural and the mediaeval conceptions.

Bishop Westcott says, "Death, *which makes the blood available*,[1] is the seal of the validity of a covenant."[2] "It will be observed that it is not the death of the victim as suffering, but the use of the Blood (that is, the Life), which is presented

[1] These italics are mine. [2] On Hebrews ix. 14.

here as the source of purification."[1] "It is important to observe, that it is not said of the first covenant that it was inaugurated 'not without death' but 'not without blood.' By the use of the words 'not without blood' the writer of the Epistle suggests the two ideas of atonement and quickening by the impartment of a new life which have been already connected with Christ's work (*vv.* 14, 15)."[2] "The position of ἐν αἵματι is significant. Blood was the characteristic mean for cleansing, though fire and water were also used. *It is the power of a pure life which purifies.*[3] Under this aspect the Blood becomes, as it were, the enveloping medium *in* which (ἐν), and not simply the means or instrument *through* or *by* which, the complete purification is effected."[4]

"The Scriptural idea of Blood is essentially an idea of life out of death."[5] "*In the Blood of Jesus* —not simply 'through' it—*we have boldness to enter into the Holy place.*"[6] "The direct references to Christ's Death are naturally less frequent than the references to His Blood. Death, with its unnatural agony, was the condition, under the actual circumstances of fallen man, whereby

[1] *Ibid.* [2] On Hebrews ix. 18. [3] These italics are mine.

[4] On Hebrews ix. 22. May I say that this thought, if worked out, would seem to me to lead to the true answer to Bishop Westcott himself, when he sometimes (as on viii. 3 and ix. 15–22) seems to limit the idea of the blood as if it were only the *means of entering into* the Divine Presence, and hesitates to use the word "offered" of the blood. The blood was solemnly sprinkled by the High Priest, when he was already within the Holy Presence. And, as representing life, it is surely the condition, or "enveloping medium," of the perpetual presence of the true High Priest within the veil. Cf. Westcott on Hebrews viii. 1, 2 (p. 230), and on vii. 25.

[5] Additional note on Hebrews ix. 12. [6] *Ibid.*

alone the Life of the Son of Man could be made available for the race (ii. 9, 14; cf. 1 Cor. xi. 26; Rom. v. 10, vi. 3 f.; Phil. ii. 8, iii. 10; Col. i. 22). The Blood was the energy of Christ's true human life, under the circumstances of earth, whereby alone man's life receives the pledge and the power of a Divine glory."[1]

Compare also these statements in the Bishop's additional note on 1 John i. 7. "It will be evident that while the thought of Christ's Blood (as shed) includes all that is involved in Christ's Death, the Death of Christ, on the other hand, expresses only a part, the initial part, of the whole conception of Christ's Blood. The Blood always includes the thought of the life preserved and active beyond death. This conception of the Blood of Christ is fully brought out in the fundamental passage, John vi. 53-6. Participation in Christ's Blood is participation in His life (*v.* 56). But at the same time it is implied throughout that it is only through His Death—His violent Death—that His Blood can be made available for men. . . . The simple idea of the Death of Christ, as separated from His Life, falls wholly into the background in the writings of St. John (John xi. 50 f.; xviii. 14; xii. 24 f., 33; xviii. 33).[2] . . . By 'sprinkling' of Christ's

[1] Additional note on Hebrews ix. 14.

[2] It is true that Bishop Westcott speaks of St. John's usage herein as differing "from that of St. Paul and St. Peter." But is the difference more than apparent? In any case they both supply many illustrations of St. John's conception. See, e.g., the passages quoted by Bishop Westcott at the end of this same note.

Blood the believer is first brought into fellowship with God in Christ; and in the imperfect conduct of his personal life, the life of Christ is continually communicated to him for growth and cleansing. He himself enters into the Divine Presence 'in the Blood of Jesus' (Heb. x. 19) surrounded, as it were, and supported by the Life which flows from Him. Compare [he adds in a footnote] a remarkable passage of Clement of Alexandria: *διττὸν δὲ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Κυρίου, τὸ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν αὐτοῦ σαρκικόν, ᾧ τῆς φθορᾶς λελυτρώμεθα, τὸ δὲ πνευματικόν, τούτεστιν ᾧ κεχρίσμεθα. καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστι πιεῖν τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς κυριακῆς μεταλαβεῖν ἀφθαρσίας· ἰσχὺς δὲ τοῦ λόγου τὸ πνεῦμα, ὡς αἷμα σαρκός* (*Paed.* ii. 2, line 19)."

To these may be added a passage from the essay on "The Relation of Christianity to Art" at the end of the commentary on the Epistles of St. John.[1] It is a suggestive passage, and has a wider application than to pictorial representations only. "It may well be doubted whether the Crucifixion is in any immediate shape a proper subject for Art. The image of the Dead Christ is foreign to Scripture. Even in the record of the Passion, Death is swallowed up in Victory. And the material representation of the superficial appearance of that which St. John shows to have been life through death defines and perpetuates thoughts foreign to the Gospel. The Crucifixion by Velasquez, with its overwhelming pathos

[1] p. 358.

and darkness of desolation, will show what I mean. In every trait it presents the thought of hopeless defeat. No early Christian would have dared to look upon it. Very different is one of the earliest examples of the treatment of the Crucifixion on the Sigmaringen Crucifix. In that, life, vigour, beauty, grace, the open eye, and the freely outstretched arm, suggest the idea of loving and victorious sacrifice crowned with its reward. This is an embodiment of the idea: the picture of Velasquez is a realisation of the appearance of the Passion."

Under the second head mentioned above, namely the culminating point of the ritual of sacrifice, it may be enough to quote such expressions as these: "Maimonides, in speaking of the Passover, lays down that 'the sprinkling of the blood is the main point in sacrifice'"; [1] and "This [i.e. the application of the blood] was the most significant part of the sacrifice." [2] But I should like also to call emphatic attention to the comments upon φέρεσθαι ix. 16 ("*for where there is a covenant the death of him that made it must needs be presented*"): and upon ἐμφανισθῆναι ix. 24, "In Christ humanity becomes the object of the regard of God"; Christ is "described as the object of the vision of God," and not God "spoken of as seen perfectly by Him"; "The 'appearance' of Christ alone is, to our concep-

[1] Westcott on Hebrews ix. 22.

[2] Additional note on Hebrews ix. 9 (p. 291).

tion, the adequate presentment of the whole work of the Son to the Father (cf. c. vii. 25 note)." So completely is this a piece with the whole principle, that I should only demur to regarding it as appearing "strange at first," or needing "explanation."

Now in all this I need hardly say that the principles which I have desired to advocate seem to me to be taught, with ringing clearness, by Bishop Westcott. But clear as the essential principles are throughout his teaching, I should perhaps admit that he does not, in every particular, appear to go quite the full length of his own principles. With his commentary, therefore, I should like also to make reference to the seventh chapter of the Rev. Geo. Milligan's volume on the *Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Mr. Milligan is full, as is natural, of the thoughts on this subject which are familiar to us in the writings of his father, the late Dr. Milligan. And there are certainly some points, as e.g. the exegesis of Hebrews viii. 3 *ὅθεν ἀναγκαῖον ἔχειν τι καὶ τοῦτον ὃ προσενέγκῃ*, and of the *ὃς διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν* of Hebrews ix. 14, in which Mr. Milligan clearly seems to me to be nearer to the full truth than Bishop Westcott.

I must not go further in the theological exposition or defence of this position. Something I have had the opportunity of saying about it before now. But it is upon this question as to the interpretation of sacrifice, and the theology

of the Atonement, that (I feel convinced) the exact statement of the Eucharistic doctrine depends. If the whole significance of the Atonement, as Atonement, was completely consummated when the tomb closed over the dead Christ, so that all that followed after was but the sequel which ensued upon, but was no vital part of the significance of, atonement or sacrifice; then, and then only, can the Evangelical exposition of the Eucharist, as a reception of the dead Christ, seem to be really adequate; because then, and then only, could the partaking of Christ at that point, as a corpse, be conceived of as a real communion with His sacrifice, a living upon the Blood of the Atonement.

Let me end by quoting a few words which throb and glow with life, as words of Canon Scott Holland are wont to do :—

"Yet again," he says, "the main characteristic of the deep religious revival in this last half-century, in all its varied forms, has been a return to the realisation of the transfigured humanity of Jesus Christ, and of His kingship over earth through the might of His Resurrection. His Glory has been felt anew as it smites down from His living plenitude into our poor flesh and blood, and makes it His own. Once again men have apprehended the splendour of the primitive and creative ideal of the brotherhood bonded together, by the covenant of Blood, into the new manhood, into the One Body, which possessed

the soul of St. Paul. All these convictions, now so potently stirring, meet and gather into the Eucharistic Action. There is their fulfilment; there is their arena of manifestation; there they must find their realised climax." And presently, "Every influence now active makes, then, for the disappearance of what now creates the cleavage [i.e. between High Churchmen and Evangelicals]. This is the hopeful outlook with which the Conference closes. It has failed to reach the desired conclusion. But it has detected what exactly it is which hinders it at the moment; and this detected hindrance is one which, under examination and explanation, ought to be found to be gradually yielding and breaking. And I cannot but believe that even those who now hold back would not continue their resistance, if once they were convinced of the utter wholeheartedness with which we who cling to union with the glorified humanity of the Lord still find all our hope and all our peace in the pardon won for ever by the outpoured Blood —in the absolute, unique, unqualified, and limitless Sacrifice done once for all at Calvary. Every Eucharist is but a reiterated declaration of the sole and unlimited and inexhaustible value of that undying Act of Death."

# THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY GHOST

(A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge at Great St. Mary's on May 20th, 1894.)

"*For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are*" (1 Cor. iii. 17).

THE Christian seasons culminate in Whitsuntide: and the Whitsun octave closes with the consciously articulated worship of the blessed Trinity. The transcendent worship set before us in the Trinity services: this is the final aspect, the consummation, of the revelation of the Holy Ghost.

The doctrine of the Holy Ghost, though from the first the distinctive truth of universal Christendom, has yet strangely faded oftentimes from the prominence which of right belongs to it. And as at some moments historically it has been obscured in the collective Church, so our own experience may testify to some among us, how much we have tried to live, how far we have even conceived of our own Christianity, as if apart from it. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost holds a place in Christianity which, if in one aspect it may appear subordinate, is found in

another to be so pre-eminent—nay, so absorbing, so exhaustive, as well-nigh to include all else.

It has, indeed, been often pointed out that the doctrine is not itself, like that of the Personality of the Eternal Son, set as a test or challenge to the faith of men; it is not propounded directly as a theme for contemplation; the manner of its announcement seems incidental; in the awe of the closing discourses of our Lord, it grows, as it were, unexpectedly, indirectly, in and through other necessities, upon the consciousness of Christ's disciples. Most true: yet when by and by the time has come that Christ's Church has her own life, and her characteristic consciousness: behold! this doctrine not only is present to the Church's consciousness: rather this is what consciousness of the Church means. The breath, the life, the consciousness, alike of the general Church and of its members individually, is the Holy Spirit of God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

These words are patient of an interpretation alike in reference to the corporate body and to the individual life. May I ask you to think, in both, what practically is involved in the simple profession of faith, "I believe in the Holy Ghost"?

The corporate meaning precedes the individual: even if the corporate truth is true only in individuals, yet the individual after all is through the corporate. What, then, in the corporate reference, is the meaning or shape of belief in the Holy Ghost? I believe in His presence—where? in His working—how? in the sphere of His working—is there a sphere recognisable? in the method of his working—are there definable methods? My belief in Him after all becomes an unreality, except it includes things like these, the sphere, the methods, the channels, the effects, the power. That there are things such as these I need not stay to argue now.

These are the things which constitute, on any shewing, the true life of the Church of Christ on earth.

As in Genesis ii, or in the vision of the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel, so at Pentecost, the breath of life is breathed into the fabric that has been built up for it, and the Body of Christ's Church is alive. Belief in the Holy Ghost carries with it as necessary corollary belief also (with whatever definition) in the Holy Catholic Church. Belief in the Church is an interpretation of belief in the Holy Ghost. Whenever I would explore in more detail what my belief in the Church really means and involves, I am examining still the methods and the channels of the work of the Holy Ghost. The history of His working is the true history of the Church. The methods of

His working are the appointed methods of the Church. The conditions of His working are the necessary conditions of the Church. So that there is a sense in which we may even say that belief in the Holy Ghost, here and now, *is* belief in the Church of Christ: as belief in the Church, in its true depths, means and is belief in the presence and work of the Holy Ghost. "There is one Body and one Spirit": one Body, whose meaning is Spirit: one Spirit, the life of the Body.

I do not need, in order to justify such words, to examine or deny a working of the Spirit outside the utmost limits of the Church of Christ. In one sense indeed His work is as wide as life. Is there any life apart from the life of God? any life that is not of the breath of God? Life vegetable, animal, rational; the light that is in imperfect efforts of religion, of the ancient or the modern world; again the calling of patriarchs, the inspiration of prophets, the training of apostles; are not these in their varying degrees, as they too are life and light, part of that unique light and life which is the breath of the Spirit of the One God? No doubt that they are so. Yet I need not pursue this now. Enough to say that in the language of Scripture not all these affirmatives together qualify the negative which fences off, as unique, the spiritual reality of the Pentecostal Church. In whatever sense it is true that the light of Sinai was not light but darkness, not

life but condemnation and death; in whatever sense it was true at the Feast of Tabernacles that the Holy Ghost was not yet; that if Christ went not away it followed that the Comforter would not come; or that the least in the kingdom was greater than the greatest born of women otherwise; in the same it is true, all seeming qualifications or contradictions notwithstanding, that the Church's life is, as the breath of the Spirit, unique: that to a Christian, even here and now, belief in the Holy Ghost is, if interpreted, belief in the Church, as belief in the Church, if interpreted, is belief in the Holy Ghost.

Again, I do not need to raise the question of the outward tokens, the proofs, or the perplexities, of the visible Church. As we look out upon the east and the west, upon the confusion of heresies and the riot of schisms, we have to ask, no doubt, where we stand and where is truth. We ask what relation remains between this outwardness, so broken and tangled, and the purity, the unity, the power, which belong to the character of the true ideal, the pure Body of the Spirit of Christ. This question too, in its time, has to be raised, and can (it may be) for each one be truly and sufficiently met. But enough now that even before we attempt to grasp the relation between the visible Church or Churches, and the true ideal, it is certain at least that there is such a true ideal, and that the ideal is the real of the Church. There is no doubt what the life of the

Church means. Whatever may be the definition of its relation to ecclesiastical organisation or police, whatever place may belong, historically or mystically, to apostolic ministries or ordained sacraments; whether these dissentients, or those, are, or are not, to be said to be within the limits of the Church; it is clear at least what the true idea and meaning of the Church is: "there is one Body and one Spirit." "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body."

The Spirit of Christ is the consciousness of the Church: the true meaning of Churchmanship. Thus it is not only true that the Church is much to a Christian; there is a sense in which it may without exaggeration be said to be everything. It is not only true that belief in the Holy Ghost is an integral part of the Creed, one-third of the whole, of equal rank and value with the other two. There is a sense in which the value of the other two may be said to be wholly dependent upon it. Remove from the Creed this faith—remove from the Church this life—of the Holy Ghost, and there fades away into thin air not a scheme of Church doctrine only, but the breath of spiritual life. In vain, then, should we try to appeal to our faith in the Fatherhood of God, or the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even while we appealed to them they too would melt away from us. We could no longer get at them nor grasp them. They would cease to be for us alive. Though the Incarnation of our

Lord Jesus Christ remained still a fact, yet the fact would be nothing to us. Though we might seem to believe in Jesus Christ, in His Divine Eternity, and condescension of Love, in His Incarnation and Atonement, His Resurrection and Ascension: yet what then? These mighty events by themselves reach their conclusion and end in the moment of the Ascension. Of themselves they leave the world, from the moment of the Ascension, only so much the more a blank. They may be true: but we have no access to them, and, therefore, no hope through them. What is it to me but despair that the Son of God came to save, if I cannot come near Him; if I and that salvation can never meet? But what access have I, save in the dispensation, through the work, of the Spirit; save (that is) through the life, in the work, of the Church? Only through the Church's life and work are the effects of Incarnation and Atonement wrought out into the lives of individuals. By the life of the Church we live: into the life of the Church we have been brought. The ministry of the Church, as a whole, in all its fulness, is the ministry of regeneration and of sanctification, of reconciliation and absolution. We may say all that we will of the meaning of the Cross on Calvary, or the glory of the Easter morning. But it is in and through the Church that the effect of these things reaches me. By the love and power which are in Her I have been brought near, by

the wisdom and teaching which are in Her my understanding is trained, and I too learn knowledge; the ministry of the Church as a whole, in Baptism, in Communion, in all daily services and teachings—the ministry of the Church, as a whole, is the ministry of salvation and forgiveness to me: the life which is in the Church is the life of Divine Holiness and Power.

It is through the dispensation of the Spirit, which is the life of the Church, that I and the Incarnation can ever meet. "Hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." Life in the Pentecostal Church: this is contact with God. "Touch me not," He said, "for I am not yet ascended unto my Father." It is only in the post-Ascension era, only in the Church, only, that is, through the Spirit, that God and we, that Jesus Christ and we, can really meet and touch.

Only through the Spirit. As it is true that whatever is the working of the Spirit belongs to the working of the Church (for the life of the Spirit indwelling *is* the life of the Church, and the living power of the Church *is* the Spirit's revelation): so, conversely, whatever belongs to the method and life of the Church is only in and through the Spirit. If the Spirit clothes itself with body and works through organs and methods, the meaning of the organs and methods, the life of the Body, is Spirit. The

ministries, the ordinances, of Christ's Church are essentially spiritual, not carnal. Their true character is only to be looked for and found, not in a material, but a spiritual direction. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life."

Baptism, and the Holy Eucharist (in close connexion with which these last words were spoken), Ordination, Absolution, and every other form that exists of ministry, or service, or teaching, or public or private devotion: all must be understood to be, in their only reality, wholly spiritual things. Their whole true meaning is on the spiritual side. It is not to be found in them as ordinances or observances, carnal or material, but rather as mystical possibilities, as experiences in a spiritual history. We cannot, indeed, insist too strongly on this.

Yet, to insist that their whole true meaning is spiritual does not mean, of course, that they have no material form or conditions. Neither does it mean that the connexion which subsists between their outward form and their inner reality—between their body (as it were) and their spirit, is itself not a vital one, but rather variable because (in the literal sense of the word) unessential. We can draw no such conclusion about spiritual ordinances—at least, until we can draw it about spiritual men. For we too, Christian men, all of us, essentially are spiritual beings, made for

spiritual life and joy—as St. Paul even passionately insists, in language which sounds to us perhaps perilously unqualified: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Our whole reality is spiritual. "Ye are not in the flesh." Does this at all mean of us—either that we, as Christians, have no bodily life, or that, for us, the connexion between our outward bodily actions and our inner spiritual reality is not a vital one? It is clear that it does not. But if our true nature and meaning wholly is spiritual, and yet this our spiritual existence is so wrapped up in the bodily that we have now no avenue, no means, no possibility of spiritual life save through what is bodily: we shall not hesitate to say in like manner also of the ordinances, greater or smaller, of the Church of Christ—first that their essential character is wholly, is only, spiritual; and yet, that of this their spiritual character and meaning, the material form may still be a real—or may even, without inconsistency, be the only—avenue.

Thus, then, in the presence of the Spirit we recognise the existence of the Church; and in the Church, as its very life, we reverence the Spirit. But if this is true, as doctrine, of the corporate Church, and if the truth of the Church precedes its exemplification in personal lives:

yet the Church is made of men, and it is only after all through its truth in personal lives that it can be true of the Church.

What, then, is the distinctiveness of Christianity to a Christian consciousness? Is it the system of thought which he owns as true? Is it his theology viewed as truth, articulated as creed? His creed indeed is to him truth, and truth is to him Divine. But God is more than truth: and it is not truth only, as truth,—certainly not truth articulated as creed, which is itself the heart of his consciousness. Is it the standard of morality which is set before him? the revelation of right and wrong, the aim of character? The Christian standard of right is indeed unique; but unique for no reason so profoundly as for this, because it never presents itself mainly as a standard; because it is not a scheme rigid or definite or dead; but multiform as life is multiform; not a rule after all, but a presence, not definable, but alive.

Beneath, then, the theological creed, though in closest correspondence with it; beneath the moral standard, though the source and the life of its morality; the true note of the Christian consciousness is the Holy Spirit, in Personal Presence, indwelling.

The distinctiveness of Christianity lies far less really in its creed-character, or in the excellence of its moral standard, than in its inner secret of living power. Though its theology may claim to

interpret, as well as transcend, the whole range of rational thought; though its theology may be the perfectest image that is possible, to finite insight, of infinite truth, yet Christianity is not mainly a theology. And though its morality matches, as no other morality, the measureless capacity of a living character, its morality is not, as morality, the measure of Christianity.

We know, perhaps, what it is, in polemics or in fiction, in conversation or in thought, to try to compare Christianity as a system with other systems, a morality with other moralities. Do we realise to what an extent, in order to isolate thus its thought or its moral standard for purposes of comparison, we are leaving out from them both what is in fact their most vital characteristic? If we wish to compare Christianity with other religions, let us at least try to take it as it is—to understand it as it understands itself. Whatever be in its eyes the necessary rank or place of theological truth or of moral character, it never mistakes its own vital essence for either. To be a Christian means—not to hold such and such a creed, or to own such and such obligations, but to be anointed with the anointing of Christ, to be alive in the Spirit. "Because ye are made partakers of the Christ ye are rightly called Christs; and it was of you that God said, Touch not my Christs," so St. Cyril of Jerusalem teaches his pupils, reminding them how Christ was anointed with the Spirit upon His baptism,

and how they too on their baptism received that chrism, which represented the anointing of the Christ. "Because ye were vouchsafed this holy chrism," he adds, "ye are called Christians."

"As, till He had ascended to the Father, Mary because without the Spirit might not touch; so," says his namesake, "those who own His Godhead, and have confessed our faith, and join us in the reciting of the Creed, we shut out from the holy table, while they are still in their time of preparation, and therefore not yet made rich by the Holy Spirit. For He does not inhabit those who are unbaptized. But where it is plain that they share the Holy Spirit, then is there nothing to restrain from the touch of our Saviour Christ."

There is small need to multiply quotations to illustrate a truth so fundamental to the Christian consciousness as this. But you will pardon one familiar echo more, in words of St. Cyprian: "When once the stain of the old life had been washed away by the succour of regenerating water, and light from on high flooded into a heart now forgiven and pure; when once I drank the breath from heaven, made by rebirth a new man; forthwith, in a marvellous way, doubts cleared, secrets opened, what was dark became plain; power grew in what was hard before; possibilities dawned in things which had seemed impossible; and I knew that the life was of earth which was

born in flesh and lived in the power of sin; but that that, whose animating breath was already the Holy Spirit, was even now the life of Heaven."

And what receives thus the comment of after Christian experience, is no less central to the consciousness of St. Paul or St. John. It is St. Paul who says of the Jewish heart, "whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 16, 17). It is St. Paul who says of the Christian Church, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"; and again, "if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9, 14): he appeals to Church members—not as outsiders that they should try and win, but as partakers, possessors, that they should "not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 20): he recognises, not less emphatically than St. John, that the living core of Christian character, that which is more than tongues of men or angels, more than prophecy, more than all mysteries, and all knowledge, more than all faith, though enhanced to the point of tremendous miracle, more than all that self-discipline, apart from it, can conceivably be, is the Spirit which manifests itself in human relations, as love (1 Cor. xiii. 1–3). And St. John—he is obviously, before all things, the "man with a secret," a secret of joyous power bubbling up,

bubbling over, within him, "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John i. 3). But the test, and proof, of this secret of communion lies here: "hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us" (iii. 24).

If, on the intellectual side, the discrimination between the true Spirit and those which will plausibly counterfeit it is to be a dogmatic one, "every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God"; yet none the less emphatically it is repeated forthwith, of the Christian's own consciousness in practical life, "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (iv. 3, 12, 13). This was to have been from the first the distinguishing character of Christian life. Long ago, at the Feast of Tabernacles, had Jesus cried, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "This spake He," adds St. John, "of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 38, 39). I need not dwell on the history of the Day of Pentecost, or St. Paul's amazement at those who could not respond to his challenge, "Did ye receive the

Holy Ghost when ye believed?" "Unto what then were ye baptized?" (Acts xix. 2, 3)

Christians, like ourselves, who have been baptized into Christ's Church, who have had our baptismal prerogative, signed, sealed, perfected, through the unction of the Spirit in apostolic laying on of hands; do we believe in that which we have, and are? do we dare to draw upon the possibilities, which, without acquiring or deserving of ours, are yet within ourselves, as St. Paul or St. John believed, and dared, and found? How much of our despondency or ineffectiveness, of the twilight or the failure, of our days, is due to our narrowed conception of Christian life? We dare not hope, we cannot effect, we will not therefore desire,—where desire and hope, because they were based on God, would have proved effectual. We believe perhaps in Christian ideals—which do but confound us: but not in the vital power of the Christian life. We know that the spiritual life is, in some sense, of one piece with the life of nature. We have learned therefore, it may be, to translate the supernatural into the natural. We have lost the immense impulse of victorious force which belongs to those who, in and through all the natural, rather read and feel still the presence and movement of the supernatural. We, therefore, in the midst of ideals, or difficulties, *are* just what we feel ourselves to be; our natural consciousness of capacity limits our character: when our char-

acter should have been expanding its capacities to match a faith in supernatural empowering; and we might have been learning to feel and find ourselves to be what (if we would but have it so!) we are!

Yet, if by thoughts like these we cannot but convict ourselves, we do it not for the sake of rebuke or discouragement. If we own that in thought, or practice, we have fallen below Christian life, it is that we may be—not relaxed, but braced—braced to new daring, of ideal at once and of action. We will not abandon faith, because we feel that it is still above us: that we have fallen below it. The faith, below which we have fallen, shall be our strength and life still.

They cannot fail, after all, who can still believe that if they will continue devoted to It, in affection and passionate desire, the living Spirit of Holiness is theirs. Not to acquire, or deserve, a spirit or power which are surely beyond their reach: but rather to believe that they have; to stir up; to reverence; in wonder and in dread to dare to use—it is this which is the characteristic effort of faith. The Spirit within them, too, for real holiness, for real crushing of evil, is the Spirit of God and of His Christ.

Only one word more. The culmination of the revelation of the Holy Ghost is, as our Whitsun octave truly proclaims to us, the vision of the supreme Worship of Heaven: and it may be that

in reverent, and progressive, recognition of the Spirit *within,* we may gain such deepening insight as we are capable of into the mystical worship of the Trinity services, into that transcendent Holy, Holy, Holy, which is to us the crowning glimpse at once of the adoration and the bliss of Heaven.

# ENRICHMENT OF PRIVATE PRAYER

(A paper read at the Derby Church Congress in 1882.)

A MAN is upon his knees. He tries to lift up his soul and speak to God. But too soon the tongue falters, mists gather before the sight, sounds of this world come floating through the ears, the mind wanders dreamily on, the stammered words have become monotonous, unmeaning, or have died altogether away. Something is greatly lacking. What can we say of it?

Now first there is, no doubt, real prayer, which knows no words nor any definiteness of thought. To be dumb, and yet to long to speak; to be prayerless, and yet to long for prayer; this is prayer, no doubt, already. But this is a rudimentary condition, and cannot in its own nature be long continued: neither is it the object of our thought now.

The prayer which properly belongs to the Christian life is conscious, and is intelligent. It is more than dumb feeling. For there, in the midst of the felt Presence of the Eternal, the mind is to be arranged, thought disentangled, the heart disciplined, desire made clear and strong:

and this purified thought, this strengthened will, to be consecrated, in the utterance of words, to God.

If I start with a narrow conception of what prayer means, my prayers will themselves be narrow. If then I am set to see that my prayers be rich, various, comprehensive as they ought, my first point is this, to ask myself what I find that I mean by prayer. The present purpose may be served by distinguishing two conceptions: the first, that it is my asking God for what I feel that I want; the second, that it is my practising to think, and to will, and to speak, face to face with God.

If mine be the first of these, I shall pray for preservation and safety, for concord at home, and good government, and victory abroad, for good seasons and prosperity, and the like; and moreover for repentance and amendment, for wisdom and love, for pardon and happiness, for grace and for salvation—and all this for many others besides myself—for my household, my relations, my friends, my country. I shall pray all the more intensely when any of these things are withdrawn, and (if I am consistent) shall not fail to thank God for them when given. But yet, in all these, however good and right in themselves, it is still true that I myself really remain the central point of thought and interest.

No doubt it may be urged that I do right to pray specially for the things in my own sphere,

seeing that my own sphere is also my own responsibility. It may be admitted that even if prayer reached its ideal perfection, these things would have no mean place in it, though (it may be) somewhat newly set. It may be admitted, too, that there is a sense in which the praying soul cannot but stand in the centre of its own praying. But we may take the sting from this admission at once, by adding that this is only a necessary truth about the prayer of a man, just so far as it must be conceived necessary in an angel's prayer also.

And so, for all that, if I have the other conception of prayer, I shall be on my guard expressly against self-centred praying. Rather I shall even strain to win for myself a centre other than myself. It will not satisfy me that my range of topics is sometimes wide and bold, so long as this merely increases (as it were) the size of my circle, and leaves the centre unchanged. It will be object both of care and pains—first to find, then to practise some rule of prayer which more fitly corresponds to the truth of God the Creator, and of this great Creation of God's, and of my place in it. I shall feel that to pray aright after God's will, I must try to take my right place in the universe of God's truth. I must pray, not by the rule of my own conscious want, but by the rule of Truth. The presence of God is the presence of all Truth ; and prayer is a rehearsing of Life in the presence of God. In my prayer,

then, I enter into relation with *all truth*. Whatsoever I am able to recognise as true; all that I know, and all that I believe; when I shut my eyes to the world, and open them as before God, I am in the presence of nothing narrower than this. When I speak with a man it is mind that touches mind; when I pray to God my prayer is my approach to the mind of God.

That I should enter into the mind of God completely would be the perfectness of prayer. That I should *try* to enter into it is necessary, even with a view to success in prayer. For if my conformity were perfect I could not pray otherwise than as He loved to order. Will it not follow that my prayer and my knowledge (of what kind soever, so it be knowledge) will not move on different planes; but the more I know, the richer will be—or might have been—my capacities of prayer? And will it not also follow that all prayer, to be intelligent, must be based on knowledge? I ought not to be stupider than I can help in praying to God. If I intercede for my friends in their difficulties of life, in their pains; if I pray for plenty in the earth; if I appeal to God in the turmoil of popular upheavings, or the clash of arms, I must not be blinder than I can help to the laws of His government—to whose government I appeal. I must not scorn, but use rather the lessons of science, the lessons of history, as well as the revealed truths of religion. For these, too, are

parts of the revelation of God's mind. And the best prayer is necessarily that which enters into His mind most perfectly. So far from forgetting science or history, let me rather study both, or, at least, let me use all the insight God has given me into either, in order that I may pray with intelligence, entering the more into the mind of God when I kneel to speak before Him.

Prayer, then, is not less wide than knowledge of truth. Can we get this in any more tangible shape? Without working precisely from the one point to the other, or staying to compare or contrast exactly, we may catch perhaps one aspect of this lurking under the old form of words, "*Lex orandi lex credendi.*" Whatever is an integral part of my soul's realities will find place in my soul's intercourse with the God of all truth. My prayers will reflect and measure my real convictions. What is left out of my prayers, is left out, practically, of my belief.

But this maxim, "*Lex orandi lex credendi,*" suggests at once a practical standard by which to test the range and scope of my prayers. This standard is the simple "*lex credendi*" — the Apostles' Creed. Is there anything in the Apostles' Creed which finds no place in my prayer? Of course mere repetition of the words of the Creed does not constitute a place. Is there anything which never intrudes into my heart's thought and purpose when I kneel to

pray? If so, my prayer is too narrow still in its range of thought. This is a test which, with a little thoughtfulness, may be made most practical.

But passing quickly by this point as to *range* or *number* of topics, I may use the thought of the Creed in another way. The Creed is the shortest formal expansion of our belief in God. But even this is a formal expansion. Shortened still more, we have our Creed essentially in the Gloria; we have it clearly in the utterance of the threefold Name of God; we have it, most shortly of all, yet completely (if only we understand it) in the mysterious cry of heavenly worship, "Holy, Holy, Holy."

The fact that this is so may help the present thought in two ways. First it will make clear to me what following the "Creed" as my "*lex orandi*" ultimately means. It means that all prayer is to have but one scope and one theme. It means that the central thought and interest of the praying soul is no longer to be self, but God. The centre round which the whole revolves is changed.

But the same fact will give another ray of light as to my prayers, and the richness of meaning in them. If it be true that the whole Christian Creed is contained in the "Holy, Holy, Holy," it follows that these words are not understood unless they suggest to my mind the whole Christian Creed. A child may repeat them

reverently enough in his prayers, but with only the slightest idea of what they convey, with little beyond an instinct of reverence. An old man, whose life has been lived to the threescore and ten or fourscore, in the presence always of the Eternal realities, who has prayed much, learned much, meditated much, may use in his prayer also the same triple title; and at each stroke of the word his heart will be thronged with memories and images. It is to him no vague, dim repetition of a thrice-told attribute; but each strong note struck will awake a long series of vibrations, one after another in countless numbers, dying away into the distance of the far-off places; not one of them really fanciful, but every one the real expression or echo of some apprehended truth of the being of God.

The meaning of this to me in respect of my prayer is obvious. It means that, be the topics or the language what they may, the richness of my prayer will depend not so much upon these; it will not be found by looking, so to speak, at the *index*—hardly even by reading the *text* itself of my private devotions—but more vitally upon the richness of meaning to me of my own simplest words; upon the depth and fulness of the music which old plain notes can set vibrating in my heart. On my own life and mind, what they are; on my intimacy in spirit with the eternal truths of God's being and the revelation of it, on the reality in short of all that which is, perhaps,

most nearly expressed to me by the name and habit of "spiritual meditation," will depend my richness of prayer.

This meditation is no merely separate exercise —a minute study of a special and narrow department only of knowledge. It is the due ordering, arranging, and interpreting of all facts of life, of all knowledge of truth. Every fresh piece of knowledge that comes to me, every fresh opening, every fresh need known, *should* be reflected in my prayerful mind. But all these would come in, not so much as new things, rather as new reflections of the old lights, new aspects of the old words. Do we not find, e.g. perhaps every year of our lives, the old words, "Thy kingdom come," acquiring two or three new hints of meaning—shall we say two or three times newly antiphoned? (And let me use this word "antiphon" for a parenthetical reminder that the actual use of the old antiphons, though impossible to our public worship, is still often wonderfully suggestive, especially on Holy Days, to private prayer.) But to return. The range of knowledge, the variety (so to speak) of sensitiveness, may be almost limitless; yet all may be found, when perfectly harmonised, to fall into a very few simple strains. We can imagine how the experience of an aged apostle might gather itself into few and ever fewer words, seeming to contract its range of materials, while in truth it only more perfectly simplified their harmony.

We can imagine how truth after truth would come to be seen merely as a new expression of some Divine attribute, and to be described not otherwise so fitly as by the reiteration perhaps of a single word, as e.g. "Love" or "Fatherhood." Not that there really were, or seemed to be, fewer interests or truths in the world: but that all were seen so to converge, that the ultimate expression of them all would be "God."

And so, for us, the Apostles' Creed is no compendium of special knowledge, but it contains the whole world.

Not so much, then, a clear sight of my own wants, but insight, such as religious meditation gives, into the Truth of God, and specially those attributes, relations, and offices of His threefold Being, which the shortest formal summary of our Christian faith opens out to me, with a rule of method which will preclude me from omitting any part of this in my regular devotions, will be such a discipline of prayer as I may desire.

There is one revealed standard of prayer. "Lord, teach us to pray. . . . He said unto them, When ye pray, say, . . ." What follows is, of course, not merely a form of words to be repeated, whether once or oftener; but it is an exemplar, by study of which we learn the true lineaments of Christian prayer.

To that, in conclusion, I appeal. Will not a reverent study of the topics of that prayer, their place, and their proportion, make good this plea,

that the first meaning of prayer is the reverent contemplation of God, His attributes, His glory; and that all else comes in only through this, as it is united with this, and thereby vivified? One can fancy that a lifelong learning to pray might be crowned at last with the power of once using the Lord's prayer perfectly.

# PART II

# ECCLESIASTICAL

# CONSIDERATIONS UPON DISESTABLISHMENT AND DISENDOWMENT

WITH SOME REFERENCE TO A DISCUSSION IN THE OXFORD DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1894 [1]

## PRELIMINARY

IT was my misfortune, at the recent meeting of the Oxford Diocesan Conference, to feel myself obliged to move an unpopular amendment to a popular resolution. Of the treatment which, under such circumstances, I received, I have certainly no cause to complain. It is wholly impossible to explain an unpopular position in ten minutes; and to many members of the Conference my attitude may well have appeared much more perverse and unintelligible than they, in their kindness, allowed themselves to show.

Nevertheless I had a meaning. And the same considerations which made me then feel it a duty to record an adverse vote, and to say so much in explanation of my vote as the time permitted, persuade me still that I am bound, so far as in

[1] [See page xi.]

me lies, to make that meaning intelligible to my fellow Churchmen.

I spoke under the disadvantage which naturally (and not unfairly) belongs to those who are thought to differ from their superiors. But whatever advantages may legitimately belong to the judgment of the majority, and of those who direct and inspire it, I must plead once more that it is not only compatible with perfect respectfulness,—rather it is a necessary element in the reality of perfect respectfulness,—that inferiors whose judgment is invited should express it quite truly. A request to a deliberative assembly to affirm approval of the judgment, by identifying itself with the action, even of its own direct superiors, is, *ipso facto*, a request to them to affirm their disapproval no less distinctly, if in judgment and conscience they cannot but disapprove. And what is true of the deliberative assembly as a whole, is no less true also of its individual members, as parts, in detail, of its deliberation. I am convinced that I should have shown, by holding my tongue, more disrespect to authority than can ever be shown by any frankness of criticism, if that criticism is made in a serious and respectful manner, and on a fitting occasion. It is difficult to conceive how any occasion could be more fitting than that on which an expression of opinion has been expressly invited from a deliberative assembly. And I trust that the Conference would acquit

me, at all events, in my actual argument, of any lack either of seriousness or of respect.

Before proceeding to the subject itself, I should like to add a few words more on this important question of respectfulness, or loyalty, of criticism; and in reference to one or two of the censures which I actually incurred at the Conference.

First, then, it was said, by way of deprecating any criticism at all, that we were in the position of subordinate officers in an army marshalled by its generals for battle; and that, whatever opinion we might privately hold about the wisdom or unwisdom of the dispositions of our commanding officers, it was not consistent with loyalty, at such a moment, to express or betray them in any way at all. I should like to protest against the use of this language. We all know that illustrations are apt to be misleading; and a parallel from physical to moral combat is especially dangerous. The secret of physical victory is aggregate of force. The secret of moral victory is adherence to truth. In a great and complicated moral struggle, in which we can only hope to win ultimately by force of truth, everything which contributes to truth contributes to success. Conceive for a moment, if only for the sake of hypothesis, in an organisation which claims to represent not partisan warfare but the battle of absolute truth, that efforts are being made—however generally or however authoritatively—on lines which cannot ultimately be the

lines of truth or true success: and on that hypothesis I submit that every voice raised, within the organised ranks themselves, against compromising mistake, and on the side of truth,—even though it be at the price of some momentary appearance (or reality) of disunion,—is really a direct accession, not of moral weakness, but of moral strength, to the cause. I especially emphasise the words *within the ranks themselves*. Such voices raised outside the host do but tend to its overthrow. Only if raised within do they (all appearances notwithstanding) contribute to its stability.

I must add (what I think will come home to those who recall with any vividness the Church politics of twenty years ago), that as even one or two voices audibly dissentient in a body which, fighting for truth, is not fighting altogether according to truth, carry a moral value out of all proportion to the importance of those who utter them; so, on the other hand, the suppression of individual divergence of judgment, in deference to whatever laudable motive, and the unreal appearance of unanimity among those who are not unanimous, and who are sacrificing far more than any individual judgment or dignity in professing to the world, and brandishing as a weapon of moral warfare, a unanimity which is not according to truth, is a disaster of the first magnitude; is capable indeed of becoming, just in proportion as the questions at stake are questions

of eternal truth and sacredness, a nearer and nearer approach to irretrievable catastrophe.

The same sort of thought may serve as answer to the charge (advanced in the subsequent discussion) that the objections raised were "academic," that they had reference to the contingent possibilities of another generation, that they were therefore irrelevant to those whose business was with the things at their feet. In an argument which must rest ultimately upon truth, it is quite as practical to be particular that the position which we take up is true, as to show zeal in obeying the call to take up a position at all. Considerations tending to show, by reference to the possibility of future modifications of circumstances, that the lines of our present contention are not absolutely right, and may become, by quicker or slower degrees, manifestly untenable, possibly may appear for the moment academic, but only, I must submit, to a temper of intellectual impatience. They are really of crucial importance, if we are to distinguish between truth and untruth in our *present* attitude; if we are to avoid the catastrophe which is, sooner or later, incurred by all those who endeavour to maintain even a just contention upon untenable grounds.

Again, it was suggested that, if it is a misfortune for the Church, as a whole, to be ranged exclusively with one of the two political parties in the State, this misfortune is simply the fault

of the political party which attacks the Church, and that Churchmen are therefore not responsible for it at all. This I cannot concede. It is true, of course, as simple matter of fact, that an attack upon Church privileges from the Liberal side is, in large measure, the cause of the rallying of Churchmen to the Conservative party. This no one disputes. Nor is it doubtful at all that there is, under the circumstances, a *prima facie* danger lest Churchmen should hastily become merely party Conservatives, that there is a natural temptation to them to do so. I concede, moreover, that if the attack of a political party should be upon what is essential to the life of the Church, upon her sacraments, her constitution, her fundamental doctrine or discipline, it might be impossible for any Churchman, without disloyalty to his Churchmanship, to be otherwise than, for the time, a political partisan. But however necessary this might become in some cases hypothetically, or whatever temptation there may be now for Churchmen to adopt this attitude over-hastily, I maintain that it is precisely for them, as wise Churchmen, to distinguish, with the utmost care, between situations which do, and situations which do not, necessitate a consequence so deplorable. That it follows legitimately from the present question about disestablishing, I unhesitatingly deny. To such a necessity we have, in fact, been indefinitely nearer in former years that we are now. Not

even the clearest opinion about the political duty of corporate religion, or the wrongfulness or robbery of State interference with it, or the extent to which Church activity may be indirectly dependent upon either property or status, would quite justify a contention that these, or things like these, are, or can be, of the essentials of Church life. If it is not so, then the question is not one in which Churchmen, as Churchmen, are bound to be all entirely of one mind. There are, for Churchmen, real arguments on the side of disestablishment as well as against it. But if the question is, so far, an open one, then it is not a case in which Churchmen are bound to submit to the misfortune of becoming political partisans. The opponents or rivals of the Church may be glad enough to see Churchmen all rushing one way; may be glad to incite and impel them to this fatal unanimity. It is for Churchmen themselves to draw the essential distinctions; and by their own calm insight and moral firmness, to avert a political identification which would be only the prelude to ecclesiastical as well as political catastrophe.

But if, in a question like this, which is not a question necessarily foreclosed to Churchmanship, it would be a profound misfortune if all Churchmen thought and acted the same way; the misfortune would be enhanced, beyond all calculation, if it were not only, in fact, the aggregate of Churchmen as individuals, but the

Church herself in her corporate existence, the Church through every organisation which gives expression to her life, the Church through her united episcopate, through her provincial convocations, through her diocesan assemblies, through her archdeaconries, rural deaneries, parishes, the Church in all her completeness, and in every one of her representative institutions and persons, which declared herself wholly committed to the approval of one, and to the condemnation of the other, of the views (neither of them inherently impossible to Churchmanship) about established privilege and perpetual endowments. Unfortunately it was precisely this very purpose which appeared to be aimed at; and with which the Conference, by the proposal made to it, appeared to be invited to identify itself. The extreme improbability of any perfect success in such an enterprise is, I must submit, no adequate justification for embarking upon an attempt in which success, if attained, would be so disastrous. It may be granted, perhaps, for argument's sake, that it is our antagonists who have created for us this condition of strong temptation towards an attitude of simple conservatism. But it will be our critical failure if we fall into the temptation: and to me at least it seems—I will content myself with saying a very inadequate rejoinder, to meet a warning on this point, not by measuring gravely the principles which are involved, still less by trying to avert the risk, but merely by urging, in

effect, that, if it is a snare, and if we do fall into it, the fault is with those who laid it for us, not with ourselves.

I am quite aware that the value of these considerations depends on the truth of the proposition that disestablishment itself is not a question foreclosed by eternal principles of right and wrong, but is open to argument. This is precisely what I contend: and it is to this that real argument ought to be addressed.

I have been taught to regard it as a fundamental precept in serious discussion, that a man should give full weight to his adversary's argument. This is to me no mere ideal of chivalry: it is a condition necessary to practical success. Every argument between disputants is really a pleading before a tribunal, the tribunal of the ultimate truth and conscience of mankind. If a man ignores what is true in his adversary's case, it follows *ipso facto* that his own position cannot absolutely be true. In the long run, the untruth, which he thereby nurses in his own case, will damage him far more than any untruth which his adversary urges against him. In the present case I am not in the least concerned to deny that many untruths are urged as arguments for disestablishing. But if there be in that pleading any elements of truth, I must submit that the marshalling of the Church to fight against disestablishment as though it were a thing inherently unrighteous, involves the ignoring of those ele-

ments, and makes the Church case at once not wholly identical with truth. I utterly disbelieve in fighting Church battles on any other principles than those of exact truth. Whatever may be their place in other warfare, diplomacies are out of place here. A little untruth of defence is more damaging to what ought to be the cause of absolute truth than is much untruth of attack.

One criticism more was made at the time, to which I may briefly refer. The Conference was warned that I had "slurred over" the fact that disestablishment was one thing with disendowment, and that it was even authoritatively admitted to have no other meaning than this. I did say, and I repeat, that it seems to me indispensable for clearness of thought on the subject to discriminate carefully between the two. That they are apt to be "slurred" I am well aware. That, with many of those who clamour for disestablishment, no thought underlies that word but the thought of disendowment, I should not dream of denying. But the more others confuse themselves and us by blurring the words, the more incumbent upon us do I hold it to be to insist upon discriminating. I am not aware of any arguments seriously urged for disendowing, except upon the hypothesis of disestablishment. But, assuming first the possibility of disestablishment, the question should be, as I conceive, whether disendowment, either in whole or in part, ought to follow as a necessary corollary of

disestablishment. I submit that the question cannot be properly answered until disestablishment has been first discussed; until, in fact, it has been settled, first, what is the general idea intended by disestablishment, and secondly, what are the grounds on which, if on any, it is right to disestablish. I should certainly not have anticipated that this plea of mine for discriminating carefully between the two things would be described as a slurring of the "fact" that they were not two but one.

I will add just one word of a very different kind. If any of my brethren whose minds are clear for disestablishment should feel disposed to claim these pages as their own on the ground that so much is admitted of the premises upon which they are accustomed to argue, I would earnestly ask them, before they lightly assume that the conclusions here drawn must needs be inconsequent or pusillanimous, to review the steps of their own reasoning, and the cogency of consequences which they now draw therefrom. It is just because I can agree with so much of their principles that I feel myself specially entitled to challenge their conclusions; and to invite them to consider again, with all judicial seriousness, what does, or does not, legitimately follow from positions which are common to us both.

## DISESTABLISHMENT

Let me begin by saying that I am not endeavouring to argue with opponents of the Church. Rather my object is to clear my own thought as a Churchman, in reference to proposals about disestablishment, and therein of course to suggest to other Churchmen the lines upon which, according to my judgment, it is right for Churchmen to be acting in the matter. I am writing as a Churchman to Churchmen, in the desire to discriminate, from the point of view of Churchmanship, between the true and the false lines of Church conduct.

I have already pleaded that it is necessary for clearness of thought to consider the case of disestablishment first of all by itself, uncomplicated by any corollaries about disendowment, and to determine our attitude towards it.

Our hypothesis is, then, that the nation is challenged with proposals for the disestablishment of the Church. What will such proposals mean?

It is notoriously—almost amusingly—difficult to state in concrete detail what are at present the consequences which follow upon establishment, or what change disestablishment (apart of course from disendowment) would actually make. After the statement of one or two insignificant details, the attempt at definition is apt to break ignomin-

iously down. But whatever difficulty there may be about practical details, I submit that as a matter of principle it cannot be questioned that what the word "establishment" really expresses is a certain attitude of the State towards the Church; and that the essence of "disestablishment" would be an alteration by the State of its relation to the Church. The Church is the Church, whatever may be the attitude of the State towards it. A proposal, then, for disestablishment is a political proposal addressed to the citizens of the State. It is a proposal to which the Church, as Church, is not, in any strictness of thought, a party at all. National favour or disfavour, national aggrandisement or persecution, though not of course unimportant in all sorts of ways, is nevertheless, strictly speaking, external to the life of the Church.

"Establishment" is an active relation of the State. The Church could not in any case "establish" herself: neither could she, in whole or in the least part, by any action of her own, "disestablish" herself. Establishment and disestablishment are alike outside her. She in respect of them both is necessarily passive.

It is not necessary for the truth of this statement that we should be able to point to a single explicit act of establishing on the part of the State. The relation may have grown up at first without any active political consciousness. But there was political consciousness, in increasing

degrees, in its maintenance in succeeding ages. And at any time, just so far as there was political consciousness at all, it was consciousness of this, —which indeed was true even without any consciousness whatever, — that established status meant a status of political character, which the State had conferred, and which the State, and the State alone, could either modify or take away.

It seems to me of primary importance to insist that when proposals for disestablishment are made, there is no ecclesiastical proposal whatever before the Church—there is only a political proposal before the State. It is not Churchmen, as such, but citizens, and Churchmen so far as they are citizens, who have a proposal before them. No doubt Churchmen, in point of fact, are citizens also. Nevertheless it is upon them, not in their character as Churchmen, but in their character as citizens, that the duty is laid of forming a political decision, and acting upon it.

It will be felt, of course, that their character as citizens is dominated and informed by their Churchmanship. No doubt it is, if they know what Churchmanship means. But however largely it may be their Churchmanship which forms their conscience as citizens, it is not a whit the less true that in their conduct as citizens they act politically : and that their duty is to do whatever is politically right. Christianity does not

supersede either political or economical duty. The Christian conscience may introduce new factors and may appear therefore to revolutionise political or economical science. But the duty to which it points in either sphere ultimately, it points to as economical or as political duty; it reinforces, it illuminates, but it does not supersede, either social or civic life. The fact, then, that the conscience of a member of the Church of Christ is with him in all his relations as paramount, does not qualify in the least degree the truth of the principle that proposals for disestablishment are political proposals, which come before Churchmen only in their character as citizens.

From this first form of statement there follows another, which seems to me no less crucially important, namely that a proposal for disestablishment, coming before us, as it does, not *qua* Churchmen so much as *qua* citizens, is in its true nature an active, not a passive, proposal. The question before us really is, not whether we should or should not *submit to be disestablished*, but whether we should, or should not, *disestablish*. The passive form of question is misleading and unreal. If it were a practically possible form of question at all, it would, by the force of its terms, necessarily be a question before members of the Church as such. But I have already insisted that establishment and disestablishment are questions necessarily outside of the sphere of

the Church as such. The Church, as such, has strictly no business with them. It is indeed, I conceive, a matter of high importance for the Church, in her essential life as a spiritual body, as the temple of the Holy Ghost, to be, and to shew that she is, passive and neutral to such political questions as this. I know that it is a matter of some practical difficulty for Churchmen to show to the world, with sufficient clearness, a distinction which may be nevertheless clear to themselves; to show, for example, that it is as citizens representing the State, rather than as Christians representing the ideal attitude of the Church, that they in this matter take one line or resist another. But though it may often be difficult, it is not therefore either impossible or unimportant. At this moment I submit that it should be one of the first anxieties of Churchmen to show that if they take an active and stirring part as against disestablishment, it is not the Church which is fighting in them. She is what she is, and in strict speech is unconcerned. But they, if they stir, stir as citizens in jealous devotion to their country. For the country it is which is challenged to political action, and their concern is that the country should not, in them, do political wrong. I need hardly say how grievously this point of important distinction seems to me to be blurred by a cry to the Church, as Church, to rally in the struggle against "being disestablished."

But whilst the question in this direction seems to me in itself unreal, it has the added disadvantage of carrying away men's minds from the real form of the question that is pressing upon them. It precipitates an antithesis between the Church and the State, between Churchmen and citizens, and causes Churchmen-citizens to range themselves in protest, as if against the hostility of the State, just when it is of primary importance that they should be rallying to the State as citizens, to help her to determine her political question according to political right. Preoccupation with the (misleading) question whether we ought to submit "to be disestablished" obscures for us the great fact that there is really a question practically before us all in our national relation—the question whether we ought "to disestablish."

The distinction between these two questions is not a formal one. Not only will the lines of argument be, to a considerable extent, different according as the one question is raised, or the other; but the conclusion itself will not necessarily be the same. There are cases in which the question, "Ought I to submit to be disestablished?" might receive the answer "yes": whilst nothing but a resolute "no" might be returned to the question, "Must I disestablish?"

I say, then, that the question of disestablishment is a political question, which comes before us in our capacity as citizens; and that the only

legitimate form of the question is—Are we, or are we not, *to disestablish ?*

It is, then, upon this basis that I should desire to examine the different considerations that may be urged as grounds for disestablishing.

It has already been urged that "establishment" is in its nature a political fact; the adoption, or maintenance, of a national relation towards the Church. It is difficult to see how anyone can admit this statement without thereby admitting also that continuance of establishment must be dependent on the continuance of the national will to establish. There is no ground on which establishment can claim to outcast the national will. The divine character of the Church does not constitute a divine obligation on the nation to maintain a particular political attitude towards it. An unestablished Church is not of itself, *ipso facto*, a political sin.

The Church, if it be a small minority of the nation, can claim no divine right to be "established" in despite of the nation. "Establishment" is a national act, and national acts depend necessarily upon national will. National will can mean only the will of the clear majority of the nation. There may be, no doubt there is, an immoral rashness in rushing into large revolutionary changes on the basis of a narrow, a doubtful, or a temporary, majority. But given a majority at once large, indisputable, and unhesitating, on the side of disestablishment, and

it seems to me that, upon that hypothesis, there is no ground of claim which could be raised from any other source for continuance of establishment. If this is true—and to me it seems little else than a truism — I submit that it is most desirable for truth that it should be clearly discerned and avowed by Churchmen. I can only maintain a true defence of establishment by clearly detaching myself from such lines as are false. It is desirable to sweep away all vestige of suspicion that we try to maintain establishment, as if by inherent right of divine appointment, upon any directly supernatural sanction. We have no right to maintain it, except by persuading the political majority, on political grounds, that it is their political wisdom not to let it go. I desire that not only the national power, but the national right to the power, should be freely and fully admitted.

Once more, then, is it right to disestablish? and here let me introduce, in order to dismiss, two or three considerations which do sometimes present themselves as pertinent arguments—but which, I venture to think, are not adequate to carry the conclusion.

First, then, the fact that I hold that disestablishment ought to follow upon the will of an undoubted national majority, is not for one moment any legitimate reason for my so talking or acting as to help to produce such a majority, unless I, quite apart from the majority, think for

myself that disestablishment is the right course and deliberately choose to adopt it as my own.

So, again, my conviction that, as a Churchman, I ought impartially, or even willingly, to *accept* disestablishment, carries me in itself no way towards persuading me that, as a citizen, I ought to disestablish.

Nor, again, does such a conviction, coupled with a strong persuasion or forecast that sooner or later disestablishment is "sure to come," constitute, as yet, any justification for my helping it to come. I have no right so to help it, until I am persuaded that both I, and all other good citizens, ought, upon the principles inherent in true citizenship, to be, under the circumstances which actually exist, disestablishers.

Further still: though I were honestly persuaded that disestablishment would be, in smaller or in larger measure, a direct emancipation and benefit to the highest interests of the Church, not even so should I be justified in endeavouring as a citizen to promote it—so long as it could be conceived that the advantage to the Church was a loss to the nation. Only where the argument took this form, namely, that disestablishment is a gain to the Church, and therefore, through the improved efficiency of the Church, *an advantage to the nation;* only, that is, in its political or national aspect, would even the gain of the Church become an argument valid and adequate for the purpose.

Putting, then, considerations like these on one side as inadequate, I endeavour once more to approach the question on what grounds are we, as citizens, to be persuaded that the existing relation of the nation towards the Church is no longer nationally desirable: that it would rather be to the advantage of the nation to discontinue it.

Three distinct forms of possible answer occur to me.

The conclusion would follow if I could be satisfied—(i) that it is not desirable in itself that the organisation of national life should have a religious basis, or any public relation to religion: or (ii) that, though such a religious basis is in itself desirable, yet the existing relation with this particular body, known as the Church of England, has become nationally detrimental, and ought to be changed: or (iii) that though such a religious basis is in itself desirable, and though it is admitted that the Church must be the established body if there be one; yet circumstances have gradually brought it to pass that the total separation of the public polity from a public profession of religion, though in itself naturally an evil, is nevertheless the lesser of two evils; and therefore, relatively, is not an evil, and is to be desired.

With respect to the first and the second of these alternatives, it is almost enough for the present purpose to name them. The abstract discussion of the first might lead far afield. But

in truth it is not a proposition which is likely to commend itself to thoughtful Churchmen. I venture to doubt whether it would present itself as plausible at all if our imaginations were able to realise more completely what it would mean. So profoundly are we accustomed to the underlying religious hypothesis in administrative government, that we probably hardly realise how helpful towards what is good are these our half-unconscious national assumptions; or how much harm would follow from the sudden avowal that the whole machinery of national life was, and was meant to be, deliberately non-religious. And, in any case, such a theory of government, adopted on principle as the best and truest, seems to me to degrade enormously the whole conception of the nature and function of government. If government is understood to be merely a sort of laborious police committee, the inference may perhaps logically follow. Certainly for my own part I have still far too profound a reverence for the meaning of government on its ideal and sacred side to regard the necessity of its separation (if necessity there be) from a publicly avowed basis of religion any otherwise than as matter of profound regret. I have, moreover, the satisfaction of being able to believe that the more secular and degrading conceptions of the function of government are already becoming, from a variety of causes, more and more generally discredited.

The second proposition, that the nation should in some way establish religion, but should not establish the Church, may take either of two different forms. It might mean, first, that the nation should adopt and establish some other religious body, — whether Roman, Wesleyan, Baptist, Unitarian, or any other,—in the place of the Church : or, secondly, that without adopting any body that exists, it should endeavour to create for itself, by State enactment and definition, a sort of establishmentarian organisation, a body, under whatever religious claim or title, which would be, in fact, a merely political creation, the outcome of the sagacity of parliamentary compromise.

The former of these two alternatives may, for practical purposes, be dismissed. The latter is not by any means an imaginary peril. It has been the ideal of able men. It is not displeasing to the instinct of a considerable number. The history of religious education for the last half-century has brought us apparently, in that department, almost within sight of the verge of its abyss. But, for the present purpose, I must be content to say of it only two things.

First, then, whatever existence it may have politically, it can never have any existence as a religion whatever. It may be a possibility, temporarily at least and within somewhat narrow limits, for bodies which have real existence on a really religious basis to compromise for certain purposes and work together politically,

or even in a measure religiously, on positive lines which are common to them all. It may be a possibility, though, as I am convinced, no more than a perilous possibility, and a limited, and a temporary one. But for a religion, or a religious body, to be created by the enactment of political majorities is a total impossibility *ab initio*. And it is to be remembered that whatever Parliament had made, Parliament could freely vary, or unmake. The new creature would, therefore, be in its ultimate essence the mere breath of a heterogeneous national majority, the ghost (as it were) of the kaleidoscopic fancy of a perverse and ignorant world. If, on such terms, it is indeed possible that a *body* might be created, certainly it would never have a *religious* existence at all.

And, secondly, I will say that, even if it were a religious possibility, it could be, to the mind of a Churchman, nothing but horror. If indeed such an attempt were ever contemplated in serious politics, Churchmen at all events would be compelled to demand, in a tone and temper utterly unlike anything that they have been called upon to use hitherto, that it should utterly let the Church alone. Any attempt by political means to coerce the Church into part or partnership with it, would be, to a Churchman, the worst kind of sacrilege. Better the establishment of the least orthodox of Protestant sects; better, a thousand times, an absolute national neutrality

about religion, than the horrible mockery and degradation of the very conception of the Christian Spirit, which is involved in the bare idea of an avowedly Parliamentarian Church. This, to a Churchman, is the enemy indeed. This is not merely exclusion, or contempt, poverty, or hardship, or persecution. Such things as those are not, to the life of Christ's Church, wholly uncongenial. But this is a sacrilegious parody of her essential holiness. The attempt to make use of her position as politically established in order to compel her to submit her very being to the will of the world, is not injustice merely, or persecution, but outrage. A Churchman may be indifferent to disestablishment, may even smile at persecution or martyrdom; but the attempt to turn the very being of the Church into dishonour, an attempt which, if *per impossibile* it could be conceived to be successful, would literally destroy her out of being, is an attempt which he would feel it a sort of blasphemy in himself to witness without a passion of resentment.

But there remains the third of the three propositions mentioned above. And this one, no doubt, is for us the most practically important of the three. We suppose it, then, to be urged upon us that the course of events has brought about a national condition, in which it is the truer and more upright course, however little it may be ideally desirable, to separate, frankly and completely, the entire fabric of national administration

and government from any national profession of religion.

Thus, assuming now that the only practicable profession of national religion is the maintenance of the establishment of the Church, there is the obvious fact that the Church is not, any longer, even approximately, coextensive with the nation; and that, if the nation nationally professes Churchmanship, there is a necessary, and a considerable, unreality in the profession. Moreover, as there is an obvious lack of right in the Church to claim to represent the entire community,[1] and an obvious element of unreality in the complete national profession of Churchmanship; so, too, in detail, the maintenance of the official profession does involve us, from time to time, in scenes of painful religious unreality. We have indeed swept away the profanations familiar in former time through the use of the Holy Communion as a civil qualification, or test; and we are becoming accustomed, more and more, to judges of assize who are not Churchmen, or mayors

[1] I am aware that this has been met with the reply that if, in the fact of the establishment of the Church, we allow what is only a majority to stand as the public representative of the whole, this is only what we not merely tolerate, but maintain as a fundamental principle in the working of our political system. For it is a necessary result of the system of party government, that the actual government, which is at any moment in power, is really representative of the opinions only of a majority. Inasmuch, however, as it is plain that the equity of government by party depends upon the explicit recognition beforehand of the perfect equality of rights of the different parties, and that every shifting of majorities shall be forthwith a shifting of governments, I must say that the theory of Establishment defended by this parallel seems to me to have little relation to the existing status of the English Church.

who (it may be with doubtful political propriety) parade their official dissent from the official Church, or public officers, of one grade or another, who are not qualified to take public oaths ; but, if such changes diminish the flagrant insincerity, they do so only by making it so much more manifest that the public Churchmanship is the Churchmanship really of only a portion of the public. Again, the unreality in question is no merely curious defect in logical symmetry, such as distresses no one, and is but racy of English political growth. It does in fact give rise to various misconceptions, jealousies, heartburnings, which go to create a movement towards disestablishment, such as, from time to time, in one detailed form or another, has long engaged the attention of politicians.

Considerations like these, then, go to suggest that the maintenance of a public profession of Churchmanship is less and less, in fact, either true or politic. Thus the conclusion that "disestablishment" has become, under the circumstances, right and wise, would follow simply as the honest recognition of the plain (if deplorable) fact that the nation is too much religiously divided to be able any longer to retain any single corporate religion ; and Churchmen, advocating disestablishment on these grounds, would be to be blamed, if at all, not because they recognised the fact, or allowed its legitimate consequences, but only in so far as their own shortcomings as

Churchmen had allowed the fact to become a fact at all. It is to be observed, moreover, that this acquiescence in the practical impossibility, under the circumstances, of a corporate national religion, is not incompatible with a general national desire for religiousness. It is indeed greatly to be doubted whether a broadly irreligious movement for disestablishment would, under the circumstances which exist at this moment, have very much chance of coming within the sphere of practical politics at all.

Such, in general, will be the character of the argument. Are we to acquiesce in its conclusion? This, I submit, would be somewhat hasty travelling. We have hardly, at all events, reached that point yet. Nevertheless, if the question is rightly put in this fashion at all, as I believe it to be, it has become plain that it is essentially a question of degree and detail, rather than one simply of principle, and arguments which ignore the reality of the case for disestablishment, and treat it as if it were simply immoral or wrong, must, from this point of view, be felt to be ineffectual, because not quite relevant to the truth.

For good or for evil, we have advanced a considerable way from the old possibility of assumption of the identity of Church and State, which was the natural basis for establishment. It may be held that the divergence has proceeded so far, in fact, that disestablishment has become the only right course. There is nothing immoral

in such contention, which at least has an obvious *prima facie* case. On the other hand, it may be held that the divergence in fact, though real, yet is not such as to justify disestablishment: that the national disadvantages in maintaining establishment on its present basis are at the most far less than those which would necessarily follow from any measure of divorce, at the present moment, between Church and State.

But what I am concerned at this moment to insist, is that this question is a question essentially of degree—it depends upon a mass of evidence in detail.

The moment it is understood to be in this sense a question of degree, a multitude of considerations in detail come in, which would not strictly have been relevant before; and about which few people probably have at present quite adequate knowledge for a final judgment.

The question of numbers becomes an important one. What proportion of the people are Churchmen? what Dissenters? what indifferent to religion? What proportion of Dissenters feel a serious grievance, or make a serious demand for disestablishment? How far is the grievance that exists religious, or social, or political? How far is the agitation against establishment a genuine movement? How far is it rather a manufactured agitation, the work of a discontented minority making a noise disproportionate to their real numbers and importance? Again, what

sort of motives are at work in it? Assuming that in this, as in every cause, there are good motives and bad, honest agitators and dishonest, how large a part is played by the dishonest agitators or the discreditable motives?

Again, even upon the quite untenable assumption that all cry for disestablishment is honest, and all motives creditable, what is the comparison between these, at their best and greatest, which disestablishment would satisfy, and those, on the other hand, which disestablishment would outrage? I said just now there were heartburnings against establishment which had long been well known to statesmen as elements in the political condition. And certainly, on the other hand, though the fact may be less aggressively familiar, there are hundreds of thousands of Churchmen to whom disestablishment would cause not heartburnings only, but such sense of outrage and insult, as no wise politician can afford to despise. I speak of men who do not admit the things which I have admitted, who do not even see that disestablishment is so much as arguable. I am not agreeing with them. But if politicians are listening to the sound of jealousies and grievances, and are inclined to be by them persuaded that the time is ripe for revolutionary political changes, I would certainly have them pause at least to give full weight to those other and, it may be, more widespread and bitter grievances, which are not eloquent now because they do not

yet exist, but which might spring in a moment into formidable life, if such a change were prematurely and unwisely made. No doubt on a point of this kind I have little right to an opinion, yet for my own part I cannot but surmise that the grievance to be allayed would pale into absolute insignificance in comparison with that which would be created, if disestablishment were to be carried into effect under anything like the conditions existing at this moment.

I said at an earlier stage of the argument that a persuasion that disestablishment was "sure to come" would not justify a Churchman in helping it forward, unless he believed himself that it was right. But since then our context is somewhat altered. In the present context, that is to say after the distinct recognition that things have advanced a certain way in the direction of disestablishment, and that the essence of the question is not, in abstract form, whether disestablishment is right or wrong, but whether the conditions which make towards disestablishment have, or have not, advanced so far as to make its consummation desirable; if, that is, it is a question of measurement and of degree, it does become relevant to consider, and to give weight to, the general character and direction of progressive development. If we are persuaded that for many generations past things have advanced unswervingly, and that they cannot but continue to advance, towards a consummation in which

government, as such, must be detached from religion: this persuasion would go some way to justify our setting our faces towards disestablishment, and gently helping to pave the way towards it, even (it may be) long before the time for its accomplishment was ripe. But are we to be persuaded of this? Even if, for a long time past, the development has seemed to be all in this direction, is it so clear that the tide is not beginning at this very moment to run with gathering volume the other way? Progress for a long time past has seemed to identify itself with a steadily increasing development of individualism. The sacredness of the individual, and his liberty, and his rights, and his opportunities—this has been its keynote, and its victorious achievements have been towards this. But ideals of progress at this moment seem more and more to be collective ideals. It is the aggregate which is sacred. The individual is to be, after all, for the sake of the community. Government, which seemed on the point of becoming utterly mechanical and secular, begins to recover its sacred and mystic character. Not the individual only, but the community, has a moral responsibility; and the people, the State, if it is to be moral ultimately, must be somehow corporately religious. I make no attempt to discuss positions like these. I would only ask, Are not things like these in the air? Are they not parts of the tendency and development of these days? And if they are, of what sort are the

corollaries which they naturally suggest on the subject of religious "establishment"? Is it so clear that the whole current is, and must be, straight towards disestablishing?

But whilst, for manifold reasons, the case for disestablishment is not clear, there can, on the other hand, be no question at all that there would be very much and very direct loss in the inevitable throwing away of the national homage towards God, the national corporate acknowledgment of the Church of Christ. If I admit that even this might become, through our sad complications of dividedness, a political necessity —but only as a relative duty, as the lesser of two evils; what are we to think of its character, if caught at in rashness, prematurely, when it was in truth not the lesser of two evils, but, it may be, immeasurably the greater? The implications contained in corporate national Churchmanship are of great value anyhow. The national sacrifice in parting from them would in any case, even if necessary, be very considerable. The responsibility of making it in a spirit of national levity, with all its reckless throwing away of history and cutting to pieces of associations,—the best probably and most deeply rooted, in many instances, of all the associations which go to the growth of our national English character, is a responsibility which must—which ought to—make the lightest-hearted grave. For if we did this thing without need, on false motives, wrongfully, the penalty

which we should nationally pay for our hastiness would assuredly be neither light nor transient.

So far my object has been to put the question of disestablishment in what I conceive to be its true proportions, and on its true grounds. I cannot express how anxiously I look upon an attempt to organise the Church, ecclesiastically, in protest against "being disestablished." I cannot express how important it seems to me, for practical purposes, to insist that the question is a political one, and to preserve the Church, *as Church*, from being wholly identified with either side of an arguable political question. I cannot say how much of clearness of thought seems to me to turn upon shaping the question in an active, not a passive, form; or how fatal a result I apprehend if the position taken by Churchmen at this juncture should be one of undiscriminating opposition to all "disestablishing," as though it were, *per se*, irrespective of circumstances, an immoral or ungodly proposal. I cannot but believe, for my own part, that disestablishment may only too easily be incurred, through the error of the defenders themselves, if they resist it on grounds in themselves untrue; and I firmly believe that the attitude which most completely accords with truth is to admit that the question is a real and arguable one, a question of measurement and degree rather than of sweeping principle; that conditions do in some measure already exist which suggest "disestablishment";

that, as the years go on, it is fully possible that it may become right for us to disestablish; but, nevertheless, to say that whilst it is very far from certain whether that time will ever come or no, at all events as things now stand, the case for disestablishing, involving so mighty a breach with the national past, and so grave a responsibility for the national future, falls far short of being made out.

I could not but venture, to this extent, to formulate my own conclusions. But I do not linger upon the conclusion now. Not less important, perhaps, even than the contention that the time for disestablishment, if it should ever come, has not come now, is the insistence that if, or when, it so comes, it will come as in itself a thing unideal, as a relative necessity, as a duty proceeding out of, and attended by, very much that is to be deplored. It will never be an ideal for its own sake. I give prominence to this thought at this point, because I am anxious to go on to a consideration of the question of disendowment also; a question which I conceive ought not to be even raised until the main lines of the position in reference to disestablishment are settled: not only because it has itself no place except as a further inference, upon the hypothesis of disestablishment, but also because its treatment largely depends upon the grounds upon which—if upon any—disestablishment has itself been first accepted as right.

If ever, by and by, the nation should, rightly, determine that continuance of "establishment" has ceased to be nationally expedient, she will of necessity do so, not in the interests of irreligion, but although, if not because, she still ardently desires religiousness, and still looks to, and depends upon, religious bodies, and therefore especially the Church (which can never, I trust, be less than the most important of religious bodies within the nation), to do for her priceless national services, services which while she can never do them, as State, for herself, she owns to be absolutely essential for her life.

The nation's act of disestablishing, on such a basis as this, will be a more than respectful separation of political and religious ideas; a separation animated by no shadow of desire that the Church should be weakened thereby, but rather by the fervent hope that she might continue as strong and effective as ever, nay, if possible, more effective still and stronger, not indeed for her own sake simply, but in the interest of every legitimate object of administrative government or of national life.

## DISENDOWMENT

If ever the hour of disestablishment should come, what are we to hold to be the real right and truth in reference to disendowment? Is the disestablished Church to continue, as of

course, to hold all her property as before, without interference from the State ; or does it follow, as a consequence involved in disestablishing, that the State which abolishes the political status will also withdraw her historic endowment from the Church ?

It is my desire to deal with this question, for myself and for any other Churchmen who may accept my reasoning, as far as possible with exact fairness and truth. And I feel that I cannot do so without saying a few words first about the general conception of property and its relation to the community as a whole. I must begin by suggesting that no right of private property is absolute. Within any organised nation, however generally, or upon whatever principles, rights of private property are in ordinary cases respected, I suppose it is clear that at least in exceptional instances, and for adequate causes, the community does claim and use an ultimate right to override all individual rights whatever. Every Railway Act is, in some measure, an instance of the exercise of this right. The exclusive rights of a private owner, though acknowledged, are not allowed to be carried to a point at which, in the judgment of the community, they would directly contradict public interest. If there is any controversy about the matter, the whole judgment lies with the community. It is true that the community thinks it right so to exercise this right as to secure to the

owner, under normal circumstances of peaceful government, adequate compensation for his compulsory sacrifice. But even so, the conditions of compensation are determined by the community. The individual may be heard on his own behalf; but he does not bargain with the community on equal terms. And no one, I suppose, would dispute that in cases more exceptional and urgent—the case of foreign invasion for example—the community would not hesitate, where it seemed to be necessary, to treat any private property whatever at discretion; or that, if any question of compensation should afterwards be raised, the question would be absolutely settled by the community itself. Whether full compensation were given, or partial, or none at all, would be wholly determined by the community upon its own principles, and according to its own circumstances. To these the owner would absolutely have to submit. Moreover, whatever opinions might be held as to the expediency or justice of the decision made by the State in particular cases, no one would think of disputing, in principle, the right of the State to make its decision for itself—I do not mean its right to decide without principles, but its right to decide, on its own principles, what was right, without reference to the consent of individual holders of property.

But if even this is true—and I do not see how it can be denied—we seem to have got, in it, a

principle at once of extreme importance for the purpose. It appears to amount to nothing less than this, namely, an explicit disallowing of any theory which would make the right of property in itself a sacred thing, valid, as if upon a sanction directly divine, in the face of all gainsayers. It is, on the contrary, unmistakably implied that the best rights of property are relative, and that there is an inalienable right in the community as a whole, for adequate cause and under fitting circumstances (of which circumstances and cause the community must be the judge), to vary or overrule them. But if we explicitly disallow an inherent sacredness of right to private property, what is the sanction upon which the scrupulous maintenance of property really depends? Probably the first and most obvious thought that will present itself for reply will be the thought of the national expediency of security of property. There is no doubt that enormous stimulus is given to every kind of activity by the steady possibilities of profit; and that anything which was felt as a disturbance, great or small, of the general security of industry and ownership, would be politically inexpedient to the most frightful degree; indeed, that it would go a very great way towards dislocating the whole fabric of society by which alone civilised life is possible. This is weighty enough. But is this all that we have to say in reply? Is the maintenance of property rights to be exclusively based upon

political expediency? Is the worst that the State can do towards private property only to act inexpediently? Is it impossible for it to act unjustly? Is the word "wrong" only partially, or indirectly, applicable to its possible acts of confiscation for political purposes?

Perhaps I need hardly argue in the abstract that there is such a thing as national right, or wrong, doing. We, for instance, are the successors of the men who abolished slavery. It is probable enough that in various ways, more or less direct or indirect, that great act may have more connection with our actual national well-being than most of us would recognise; but it is perfectly certain that, at the time, the appeal of those who promoted it must have been to the national conscience of right and wrong, as such; any appeal then made to the hope of material advantage, however much in the long run it might be true, could not possibly have failed to mislead. But whence came, in that case, and whence comes in the case of property, that new element which lifts the question above distinctions merely of expediency into the atmosphere of right and wrong?

I must answer that, as a simple historical fact, the development of the Christian conscience has made certain fundamental ideas a necessary part of the furniture of the minds of the men and the nations which are products of Christianity. I do not say that men or nations cannot possibly get

rid of such conceptions as are essential to the Christian evolution. But I do say that they can be got rid of effectually only by a very gradual process of deterioration; the mere abjuring of the Christian faith will hardly eliminate them for many generations to come. Now, whilst I do not admit that the inherent sacredness of private property is to be found among these essential conceptions, I must maintain that they do nevertheless absolutely require that the individual personality should be treated with reverent fairness. If the Christian revelation is the highest ideal manifestation of the brotherhood of humanity, that is, of the very crown of collectivist or socialist aspiration, it is at least as strikingly true, and as characteristic, that it reveals, as nothing has ever revealed, before or since, the divine sacredness of the individual personality; and that it is by magnifying, not by suppressing, the reverence for the individual that it works towards its ideal of collective brotherhood. It was, as we all know, many centuries before this essential truth of Christianity gradually worked out in the consciences of Christians the sense that slavery was an absolute wrong. But there is no question that, when the conclusion came, it came in this form—not another. And it will be long before the consciences of Christianly descended nations will be able to set up the slave-trade again, without unmistakably knowing that in so doing they

are guilty of no merely reactionary unwisdom, but of an eternal wrong.

Now this deeply inwrought conception that the individual has an absolute, a divine, right to equitable and reverent treatment, has to be worked in with the considerations of the national expediency of security of property tenure before we are able to describe aright the character of any claim, against the nation, to private property ; or of acts, on the other hand, of national confiscation, to which public expediency might appear, from time to time, to point. The individual has *no divine right to such or such property,* but he has *a divine right to be treated, in all matters, as equitably and reverently as possible ;* and therefore, so long as the system of private property is held to be nationally expedient, he has (not directly, but inferentially) a sort of divine right not to have his property interfered with, *except upon such principles of equitable and reverent treatment as the circumstances admit.* The community which interferes with the property of individuals, without reference to this condition,—a condition which is itself the product of the evolution of the Christian conscience, —is guilty not only of inexpediency, but of positive injustice. And I suppose it may be added that there is at least a certain presumption of such injustice in every case in which any one individual property is interfered with, on exceptional principles, without obvious and overwhelm-

ing national necessity. At least, to overcome the presumption of injustice, the case for interference must be very strong.

Hitherto I have spoken simply of individuals, —and only so far of property-holding corporations, as their case may be assumed to come under the same principles which apply to individuals.

But I have now to point out that the presumption of injustice which arises from any exceptional intervention, in reference to property, on the part of the State, is, or tends to be, somewhat less in the case of a corporation than in that of a private person. I do not of course mean that it must be so in every instance. But a corporate body, so far as it has legal rights, has them by political permission in a sense in which it would hardly be true to say the same of individuals. The State has an option about recognising corporate bodies, or allowing them publicly to exist, which it can hardly have, in any similar sense, about the existence of those who are born its citizens. And when they politically exist by virtue of the State's permission, the State claims naturally a certain power of positive superintendence and authorisation in regard to them, beyond the negative restrictions with which it keeps the individual life from illegality; their conduct is felt to be matter of public concern, as the (not illegal) conduct of any private person is not: there is felt to be in them always some element of the

character of a public trust: a corporate body which claimed the irresponsible discretion of an individual with regard to its property would be felt to be, *ipso facto*, an anomaly. This inherent visitatorial power, based upon the fact that no corporate body can exist, in a legal or property-holding sense, except by continuous consent of the State, makes it natural for the State to exercise a revision over corporate properties which it does not exercise over private possessions: and for that very reason it is felt that the impolicy of interference, on account of the risk of general unsettlement and insecurity, which is near at hand when the usages of private property are touched, is at least more remote in case of the public revision, by the community, of the tenure of a corporate body.

Again, I must submit that the presumption of injustice in a national overhauling of the property and tenure of a corporate body tends to diminish in proportion to the greatness of the corporate body itself, and of the property held by it. It is, I suppose, quite obvious that if, by any combination of historical accidents it could be conceived that any corporate body, existing for any imaginable purpose whatever, should have come to hold in its hands, say, four-fifths of the entire total of the national wealth; it would become at once a pressing political necessity for the nation to review, and to modify, a condition of things so extraordinary and so perilous. Of

course I have deliberately put an extreme and even absurd case: but the very absurdity will illustrate the truth which I want to point out. The smaller the scale of the corporation and its property, the more is it equitably possible, other considerations apart, to treat it as a single individual would be treated; but the larger the proportion of its property to the property of the nation, the more does the whole question of its property become, in equity, a national question.

Once more, the presumption of injustice, in regard to such a corporate property, tends to be less, not more, in proportion to the antiquity of its title and tenure. I do not mean that it is true, from beginning to end, to say that the newer the title the better its authority: but I have no doubt that it is true that, after a certain lapse of time, every addition to the remoteness of antiquity tends to produce an actual diminution of stability. If any tenure of property in the world could now be carried back to the great political and economical settlement made by Joseph in Egypt some 3,500 years ago, the presumption, from the mere fact of the date alone, would be practically almost overwhelming against its being applicable, or tolerable, under the altered conditions of to-day. Perhaps it will be felt that while this supposition is extreme, a tenure of some 1,200 or 1,500 years would constitute a wholly different case. Why different? Will the answer be because the earlier date belongs, in

effect, to a really different world; but the latter falls within the limits of Christianity, and within the limits of Christianity the conditions are essentially unchanged? I think that such a distinction would tacitly concede the very point I am aiming at. It would imply that the value of an ancient tenure was not based upon its antiquity; that it depended rather upon the continuity into modern time of such ancient conditions as justified the original appropriation of the property. And if so much is conceded as this, I do not see how the further admission can be withheld, namely that the remoter the time of the original appropriation, the greater, *prima facie* at least, is likely to be the task of showing that the essential conditions are unchanged.

And here perhaps I may venture to suggest that the circumstances of the historical origin of such a property hardly appear to me to be a consideration so crucial for determining the rights of the community in respect of it, as they are often thought to be. In the case of a private individual, indeed, I doubt whether they are material at all. Suppose, for instance, that the property left behind by the conqueror of Blenheim was based, in the main, upon grants from Queen Anne and her parliaments. I fail to see that such a fact would confer upon the nation the least moral right to treat it in any exceptional manner now. The ultimate right to revise or overrule, if necessary, is (I submit), upon this

hypothesis, exactly what it is in every other case of private property—neither more nor less. I do not say as much as this of corporate property. But I should neither concede, on the one hand, that a public, or even a parliamentary, origin of a corporate property would be adequate proof, in itself, of unlimited national right to control or cancel: nor, on the other, that the fullest proof of an origin wholly private would carry the property, for a moment, beyond the reach of inherent national rights.

There is yet another, and perhaps a more serious, application to be made of this sort of thought. As the question does not seem to me to be foreclosed by the legal circumstances of the origin of the property; so neither does it by the simple fact either of the holiness of the motive or the divineness of the purpose for which the property was originally given. Whatever natural rights in respect of it would have validly existed otherwise are not estopped merely by the fact of a dedication, once for all, to the service of God. If a pious landlord should spend £1,000 a year in maintaining a chapel, chaplain, choir, schools, etc., on his estate for the glory of God, this fact would not take away from his descendants their natural discretion as to the perpetuation of the expenditure, nor make it sacrilegious in them, under altered circumstances, to arrange their property otherwise. Should he leave money in trust for such a purpose, there would be, of

course, a legal barrier to their discretion: but inasmuch as the difference would be legal rather than moral, no charge either of sacrilege or wrong need necessarily lie against those who should seek or obtain, for adequate reasons, a legal removal of the legal impediment. Any suggestion that a dedication once for all to God's service makes God so the owner (in the human sense) of a property that it cannot, without sacrilege, be diverted from divine use for ever, suggests (I own) nothing to me so directly as the warning word "Korban." I cannot admit, then, that the plea, "This was dedicated to the service of God," is of very great weight, by itself, to bar any natural rights that may exist. It is obvious, of course, that the plea, if it takes the form, "This was meant to do, and has been doing, and *is continuing to do* conspicuous service to the cause of God in the world," is at once altered in character. The very alteration is for my present contention significant. And if it should take the further form, "This is doing such service to religion as to be of priceless value *to the community*," the plea, if made out, is of overwhelming force not to prevent the community from raising the question of its continuance, but to persuade it to determine the question, when raised, on the side of continuing. But this of course is a wholly different thing from a claim of divine ownership, which it would be sacrilege even to call in question. I cannot,

however, pass away from this thought without the remark, to which I may have to refer again later on, that things not wrong in themselves may be wrongly done. What is not sacrilegious in itself may too easily become sacrilegious in the doing.

Now all the things which I have said hitherto it has been possible to say in an abstract form. Though they are said, of course, with a view to the Church of England as endowed, their truth does not depend upon anything specially distinctive of the established Church. I have, therefore, still to raise one consideration which these more general principles do not touch.

From the beginning of English history the Church has been, in fact, "established" in England. In the fact of establishment she has (without alteration of her essential life) acquired a secondary existence of a political kind. *Qua* Church, she is a spiritual body, of divine constitution and life. But *qua* Establishment, she has become a political body also. In a sense, no doubt, every spiritual association is political also, directly it has an existence recognisable by the State, directly, for instance, it owns any property at all. But the Church, *qua* established, has had, and has, a political existence of very much more developed character than this. As a political body she has been conterminous and co-ordinate with the State: I will not say politically created to be, but politicially accepted

as being, the authorised presentment of the religious life of the nation; and therefore, so far, capable of being described as an aspect of the national existence. The corporate body of the nation, religiously organised as Church, has represented, no doubt, very different ideas and sanctions from those expressed by the corporate body of the nation as State. Nevertheless, in both cases the actual corporate body has been, in idea, at least the same one corporate body. If, then, the Church, being (not essentially but) in this secondary or political sense a presentment of the religious aspect of the State, received and held corporate property, the question may be asked whether she held this property simply in her proper character as Church, without reference to the fact that politically she was also the religious presentment of the State, or simply as the State in its religious aspect, without reference to her own essential independence as Church. It may well be, indeed, that the question could not possibly be answered: for by the hypothesis, neither alternative without the other could be absolutely true. Nevertheless, "disestablishment" is a raising of the question; and the question so raised must be dealt with, even though no answer simply given may be quite the whole truth. Is this property the property of the Church, as such, however widely the Church may be sundered from the State? or the property of the State, as such,—of the State

(no doubt) for Church purposes, while the State still chooses to be, in one aspect, one with the Church,—but still of the State ultimately, supposing the Church aspect of the State should come to an end? and those who at different times have conferred wealth on the Church, whether kings, or public councils, or private men, how far did they in every case endow, or intend to endow, the Church whether nationally established or not, or the Church because she was nationally established?

It has seemed to some minds that because it is difficult to claim either of these propositions as absolute truth, therefore the truth must lie—nearer possibly to one than to the other, but still—somewhere between them: and that, if the truth lies between them, it would follow that, in the case of this particular corporate property, the State may claim not only on general principles an ultimate oversight, but something approaching, more or less, to a joint ownership. How, it is asked, can we suppose that the property would have grown as it did, or would have been preserved as much as it has been, except upon the hypothesis of the identity of the Church and the State, except, that is, by virtue of the contribution of the political guarantee, worth practically (if indirectly) no small sum of money, for which the Church is indebted to the State? And if, after all these centuries of identity, the union is at last to be dissolved, ought not the State, as

in the case of a dissolution of partnership, to claim at the least some, perhaps indeterminable, mixedness of ownership with the Church?

I cannot but think it well worth while to put this case, not only because some such feeling has a place, in fact, in many minds, but also because I am persuaded that there is in it some element at least of truth, which it would be perilous for us to ignore.

For the present moment, however, I merely make use of this thought as a sort of climax to the considerations going before: and upon them all I must certainly say for myself that, in the event of the great political change known as disestablishment, I concede, *ex animo*, that the State would have not only the power, but the right, not only the right, but the duty, to go most fully into all the details involved in determining the question of disendowment. So far from being able to agree in any claim that all question of property should be left alone, as if either sacrilege or robbery or injustice would be necessarily involved in touching it, I should rather hold that it would be a palpable dereliction of duty on the part of the community to let that mighty revolution take effect without trying to get, even painfully, to the bottom of the question of the continuance of the endowments, as a complex question of the highest political responsibility. I concede, moreover, that whatever exaggeration there may be in simply calling Church endow-

ments national property, there is some exaggeration also in simply denying that they are national property at all. The phrase requires, indeed, to be examined most carefully : the more so because it is at once both passionately asserted and passionately denied ; and those who assert and those who deny alike, do so with conscience of a truth, and the certainty that nothing which contradicts them can itself be perfectly true.

But, after all, though it has seemed to me important to say these things, they are but preliminary to the main question. Is it, then, or is it not, upon all the data, expedient, or right, that the property, in whole or in part, should be diverted from the disestablished Church?

Again, in this question, as in the previous one about disestablishing, I must insist that the active form is the only form in which it ought rightly to be put. We approach the question as citizens, as part of the voice and conscience of the nation which has to determine it. The question is *not* whether we, as Church, ought to suffer disendowment. The Church, as Church, is in such matters necessarily passive ; accepting justice with gladness, and injustice with patience, but in either case accepting, as of course. The question *is*, whether we, as State, ought or ought not, on the hypothesis of disestablishment, to determine to disendow. If we had nothing to do with the matter except as Churchmen, we should have no question to determine at all. If

we had nothing to do with the matter directly, as Churchmen, but indirectly only as helping to influence the judgments of those who were to determine it, the question we should try to determine indirectly in them would still be the question in its active form, whether they were, or were not, to disendow. But, as it is, we have not an indirect, but a direct responsibility, in determining a question which is laid upon ourselves: a question, moreover, of which I will venture to predict that it depends upon Churchmen-citizens to settle—in this sense at least, that it will not, for many generations at all events, be settled against the clear conscience and voice of united Churchmen.

If the question were merely "Ought we to submit to disendowment?" there would be much to be said for the answer "aye," which must now be dismissed as irrelevant. The question laid upon us is a graver one than this, namely, "Ought we, all things considered, in conscience and in truth, to take ourselves a part in disendowing?"

Now when the question is raised in this, its true form, it seems to me obvious to suggest at once that the true answer must, in the main, depend upon the grounds for disestablishing.

Thus, if it should be determined to "disestablish" the Church on the ground that the nation had changed its mind about religion, and thought Church doctrine and morality hurtful to

the State, I think that the public relation to the property is such that the case would be very strong for refusing to listen to any plea that it should still be left in the hands of the discarded corporation, and for insisting upon its transfer, in large part at least, to other and more valuable purposes. I mean, of course, that on such a hypothesis the State would be not only likely, but right to divert the property in greater or less degree. Those, therefore, who really hold this to be the case are consistent, upon their premisses, in disendowing. To a Churchman-citizen, however, this hypothesis is itself impossible. If a majority of others adopted it, however right they might be on their own premisses, he could merely be in the position of submitting to a wrong.

But if ever the time should come when disestablishment should be accepted as the right course, even by Churchmen, on a ground very different from this: because, as suggested above, the dividedness of national religion had reached such a point as to make establishment, though ideally as desirable as ever, yet no longer fairly justifiable,—and this is the only ground (as I conceive) on which real Churchmen have a right to become disestablishers,—what would be the practical meaning of the situation? The nation, if it acted on this hypothesis, would not desire irreligion, but religion. Even for its own essential national life, it would earnestly desire the highest possible welfare, and the most effective

practical success, as of other religious bodies within the State, so, not least emphatically, of the historical Church with which its own life had been for so many centuries linked, and from which it had at last severed itself, not for severance sake, but under necessity; not in contempt and hostility, but with reverence and regret.

Now in case of a separation, such as this, of Church and State, every possible motive would exist for the most reverent and sympathetic treatment of the separated Church, which was compatible with equity. The single fact, itself felt as a pity, that it seemed right to sunder the national organisation from the Church, would, if anything, rather go to enhance, than to diminish, the national desire for the Church's well-being. It is obvious that it makes an enormous difference in what way the question of disendowment is raised. If the question should be raised in a form which, assuming that disestablishment must carry disendowment, merely asked, in disendowing, first, how much, nevertheless, (if any) of the property it might still be necessary to leave in the hands of the Church, and then, what methods the secular nation could most prudently devise for the spending of the newly-gotten treasure; I fear that, human nature being what it is, answers to questions so framed would have little chance of being in accordance with any very disinterested principles of equity. But to me it seems to be almost axiomatic that, if the question is

not decided according to disinterested principles of equity, it is bound to be decided amiss. Self-interest, entering on this point into the national decision, would be as a taint of poison, incompatible with healthiness. For the possibility of a rightful decision to disendow, purity of motive is a *sine qua non*. I submit, then, that the question raised should rather be, assuming that the disestablishing nation sincerely desired the best success of the Church, and was bent upon according her, in all equitable ways, the most reverent treatment possible, how far, nevertheless, the truth of the highest national interest or equity might demand and require that the revenues so long occupied in Church work should, in whole or in part, be diverted to some purpose of more national importance for the future.

If the revenues which the Church possesses are regarded as being, in fact, the property of the Church; if the question to be decided is therefore regarded as being, in the main, the question of the attitude of the State as a whole, at a moment of important political change, towards the property tenure of an exceptionally large, and reverend, and ancient corporation, which has long held property within it: there would be in, the first instance, as I conceive, an equitable presumption that—at least under the circumstances just supposed—the property of the corporation would not be interfered with.

There are two considerations, however, which occur to me, either of which might rebut this favourable presumption. These would be, first, that the amount of property was so great, even in relation to the total national wealth, that its retention in the hands of a single corporation would be in itself a cause of political or economical risk to the welfare of the community as a whole. I profess no knowledge of statistics. If this, or anything like this, could be made out, I for one should be ready to admit that the State was called upon to interfere. But meanwhile it is difficult to believe that there can be even a serious contention of this. Again, the presumption might be rebutted, if the amount of the property, without being perilously large in proportion to the wealth of the nation as a whole, were nevertheless so large as to constitute a foolish and mischievous excess, in proportion to the value of the work sustained by means of it. It is, I think, both striking and pertinent to observe that any such assertion as this would be nothing less than a manifest absurdity. Large as the income of the Church, regarded by itself, may seem to be, it is a fact only too glaringly patent, that it is, even miserably, insufficient for the mightiness of the work which has to be done, and which in fact is being done, by means of it. Nor would it be easy to find a stronger form of testimony to the value of the Church, as viewed even from without, than this, that its work is so vast as to make

its actual endowments, in spite of any superficial appearance of largeness, thus miserably, nay, appallingly, inadequate: so inadequate that the underpayment, not to say the actual poverty of the clergy, though for many causes largely disguised, has nevertheless itself, in the last few years, been approaching to something almost like a national problem.

In the face of these facts it would certainly seem to me that, in the event of a disestablishment conceived and carried out upon the hypothesis sketched above, the balance of equity would certainly lie not towards, but against a national removal from the "disestablished" corporation of whatever property could be fairly regarded as having really belonged to the corporation before.

But it is necessary to remember that there is another hypothesis, the hypothesis that the property was not, or was not altogether, the property of the Church before, the hypothesis, if not of an ultimate national possession, at all events of a divided ownership with the State.

Now I have been anxious to concede to the uttermost (at the least for argument's sake) everything that had, or might have, truth behind it. For this reason I have felt constrained to admit that there is something of real truth in the mind of those who plead that endowments conferred at different times and in different ways upon the

Church, while its identity with the State was, in the minds of all, a matter of course, can hardly be claimed as private corporate property in quite the same sense as if they had been conferred upon the Church as a separate, private, and exclusively spiritual body. But if I concede that there is exaggeration in such a claim on the Church side, I must certainly insist that there would be (to put it at the lowest) a similar exaggeration if it were claimed upon the side of the State, that the property had never been—either meant to be conferred, or conferred, in fact, upon the Church, as Church, at all; but that it had always been, and that it is wholly now, the property only of the nation, as such, a property in which the Church, in the event of disestablishment, would have no proper right or interest at all. I fancy that historians could make, if not a flawless, yet a fairly strong case for thinking that the political character of the Church, without having so much as is sometimes assumed to do with its original aggrandisement, became afterwards almost, if not quite, as effective in limiting, or alienating, as in conserving its property. I fancy that no one except a theorist, arguing *a priori* out of modern ideas, could seriously contend that the Church alone among ecclesiastical bodies, in spite of the age-long devotion of the thousands who have striven to dedicate of their lands or their wealth to her service, is now and always was without property

of her own at all. Any such extremer form of theory, therefore, which would claim all Church endowment as property simply national, I must put altogether aside.

Still there remains the theory that, however impossible it may be to ascertain the proportions, there is at all events some case for a claim on either side: that there is really, therefore, a divided ownership, and that in the event of disestablishment, as in the case of a dissolution of partnership, the true equity would be, by some compromise, albeit in this case necessarily a rough one, to recognise the justice of the case of either claimant.

I am not prepared for my own part to contend that such a view is without foundation; or to speak in any strong language of those who would endeavour to frame a serious policy upon such a basis as this. Nevertheless, in a question of infinite complexity, in which the one thing wholly plain is the exceeding difficulty of exact truth, I must say that I am not convinced that this is, after all, what the justice of the matter really requires. And certainly in some respects this language requires careful scrutiny. Thus an analogy with dissolution of partnership is at the most an imperfect analogy. The union, indeed, of a capitalist partner, who does no work, and a working partner who brings no capital, is a familiar case. If it could be contended that, in the union of Church and State, the State had found the money

and the Church the work, the dissolution of partnership might perhaps be carried out upon intelligible principles of finance. But it will hardly be urged, as matter of history, that Church endowment means endowment simply conferred by the State upon the Church. It would be, if less simple, at least as plausible an interpretation of their pecuniary relation to maintain that the property was given to the Church by those who gave it (amongst whom some more or less represented the State) very largely upon the strength of the State's guarantee. But this is hardly a case of partnership. It is not that A does the work, while B finds the capital. Rather it is that A, without capital, sets himself to work, with a subscription, perhaps, and the strongest of recommendations from B; and other owners, one by one, gradually subscribe to enlarge and maintain A's work, moved thereto partly by direct affection for A, partly in deference to B (who gives A his name and guarantee), and to A because backed by B—no one, it may be, distinguishing, or even knowing, how far he really loved A for his own sake, or for B's because B loved him. And in this case, if subsequently B withdrew his support and insisted that A should stand altogether alone, it would be very hard to make any equitable statement of a claim on B's part to the capital subscribed for A's work—even though he himself might, to some unknown extent, have attracted the subscriptions, and

might have been from time to time amongst the subscribers.

Or suppose the case of an independent mediaeval barony, or a modern African chieftainship. The baron or chief introduces the Church — its priests, its bishop — encourages, establishes, supports them. He himself finds them a habitation, builds them a church, and gives them gifts, and encourages all his followers to do the same. Gradually, by innumerable offerings, there is built up an important, though, it may be, not superfluous endowment for the ever increasing work of the Church there localised. The gifts, themselves in time and place countless, are given, many of them, out of genuine gratitude for spiritual benefit, to the Church and her work; some, on the other hand, from clan-feeling, and mere loyalty to the lead of the chief. After some generations, the descendants of the chief or baron, for one cause or another, wholly withdraw all patronage, friendship, or help. What then? It will perhaps be assumed that at least in any imperfectly settled society, such as the words chief or baron may suggest, the withdrawal of favour will naturally be followed by despoiling. Possibly: but for us the question rather is how far, in the highest development of moral civilisation, with all its evolved conceptions of reverence for every detail of personal right, with all its evolved conscience of Christian equity, it is right, and necessary for perfect justice, that the great

act of withdrawal of chief- and clan-friendship—that friendship which before it was withdrawn was itself one great factor in the Church's enriching—should constitute for either chief or clan a claim to part possession in what had at least been supposed to be the property of the Church. I cannot help fancying that, at least in the cases supposed (even if the withdrawal of countenance were, more or less, unfriendly—much more if it claimed to be an act of conscientious and respectful necessity), the pressure of any such claim would be felt, by the conscience of civilised equity, to be a retrograde and shortsighted step. And I cannot help asking whether the cases, as supposed, do not supply an analogy at least as pertinent to our present question as any phrases about joint property or dissolution of partnership: whether, therefore, any claims in the direction of disendowment, based on such phrases, are really justifiable, after all, in the light of the highest equity.

The question is fraught with difficulties in detail. For perfect acquaintance with its conditions a vast mass of antiquarian knowledge would be requisite. It is possible that accumulation of knowledge might alter the balance of evidence as at present apparent. In such case, I think I may fairly profess myself open to conviction. But meanwhile I must say that I am not convinced.

Before I put my hand to a work so morally

perilous as "disendowing," I am quite sure that I ought to be clearly convinced of its necessity. This follows to me not only upon the true conservative principle that prescription and authority have a right to prevail until the case for change is certainly made out; but because in this particular proposal there are risks of national catastrophe which nothing, I believe, could justify the nation in running, upon less than the clearest conviction that conscience of equity absolutely demanded them. The risk to the nation that disendows is enormously great. It is to be remembered that what is not immoral *in re* may *in modo* very quickly become immoral, and what is not sacrilegious in itself may easily turn into sacrilege in the doing.

The real quality of such an act on the part of the nation would depend ultimately, I suppose, upon the purpose and meaning with which it was done. What is the reality of the motive towards it, of the meaning in it, with which we should enter upon it, if we entered upon it now? No doubt, in great and difficult political movements, mixed and doubtful motives often, as it were automatically, unconsciously, I had almost said by a sort of professional necessity, clothe themselves as conscience. Is the inner heart of this measure, both in those who propose it and in those whom they conciliate by proposing it, a genuine obedience to the prompting of conscience and duty?

But even if the original motive be, in the main, pure, there is very much in the detail of what would follow which might, only too imperceptibly, turn to demoralising. It seems to me abundantly clear that there is in no sense any other great object of at all primary importance, upon which there is anything like a call of national necessity or conscience in this generation to be spending the endowments which have hitherto been regarded as the property of the Church. I do not, of course, say that objects, of more or less interest, may not presently be found. But if the Church should be disendowed, the question will spring at once into existence, as a new question not without its own special embarrassments, how best the nation can spend the fortune of which it has suddenly possessed itself. This question itself makes appeal to, and lets loose, a host of ignoble desires. It is inevitably fruitful in suggestiveness of evil. Statesmen may try to minimise this evil by answering the question as rapidly as possible, and making believe that they have answered it before it has arisen. But the conspicuous absence of anything like an alternative use, which can even seem to compare, for one moment, with the dignity or sacredness of that use from which the endowments would be transferred, makes the question, with all its suggestiveness, to be already present, as an inherent element, in any serious proposal to disendow.

Moreover it is not only at first that the question will present itself. More and more, the working out of the details of any possible answer or set of answers will tend to nourish and stimulate, progressively, the very feelings and motives, the existence of which must frightfully imperil the moral character of the entire proposal. The moment the instinct of greed, the temper or spirit of despoiling, was fairly awakened, and men yielded to the natural pleasantness of diverting a store of money to uses which immediately touched themselves, I believe that the individual, or country, or nation, which so accepted and rejoiced in this comfortable sense of self-enriching, would be directly, through its handling of the money, on a lower level morally. And if to this pleasantness there should be added also, albeit in the second instance (but increasingly when it once has begun), some element of jubilant, perhaps mocking, exultation over the impoverishment of the Church, and the difficulties and humiliation of Churchmen because they were Churchmen: who will venture to say that the policy entered upon,—it may be with the fairest promises, arguments, and hopes,—might not prove to have turned, imperceptibly, unconsciously, irresistibly,—to the consternation of its sponsors, and the deep and abiding degradation of the people,—into a monumental act, after all, of national immorality, perhaps even of national sacrilege? These certainly are not imaginary, or

light, perils. They are not contingencies which thoughtful-minded statesmen can afford to ignore. Nor can measures of such vast and revolutionising import as disendowment be entered upon, in lightness of heart, as experiments. I am far from saying that a just or moral disendowment is never conceivable. But if in this matter the nation should, without adequate cause, upon motives which either began, or ended, in greed and levity, do rashly what really was wrong, before God and man; I cannot doubt that the disaster to the national life, incurred thereby, would be at once profound and irreparable.

I must, then, conclude by saying that, even upon the hypothesis of disestablishment—whatever I may hold that the Church should passively accept in the way of "being disendowed," which is emphatically *not* the question,—I am by no means yet convinced that it is nationally right to disendow. I am open, indeed, to be convinced. I am far from thinking that I have the whole data before me. Complete judicial knowledge of all that is involved would require innumerable details of intricate, and often most obscure, history, national alike and local, which are very imperfectly known to most of us. By all means let every possible form of responsible and serious inquiry go on, searching out facts and accumulating light upon this great question, whereof nothing is quite so manifest as its immense complexity. But till that large body of Churchmen

(upon whom, more than upon any others, the determination of this great question does, I am convinced, ultimately depend) have surer reason than appears at present to be convinced that truth and equity demand disendowment, I must hold that it is their duty to refuse to disendow.

## THE QUESTION OF WALES

After venturing to say so much in reference to the subjects of disestablishment and disendowment in general, it would seem undesirable to conclude without a few words upon the special question of Wales. It is assumed, in reference to Wales, that disestablishment is to carry disendowment. Indeed, there are strong reasons for supposing that those who support the change do so much more directly with reference to disendowment than to disestablishment. I have no doubt that this is beginning at the wrong end, and that it exposes the entire movement, with some justice, to suspicion. Solid reasons for disestablishment are quite conceivable, and real grounds for disendowing as a result of disestablishment. But in no case whatever can the desire to disendow become itself a legitimate ground for disestablishing. I shall not, however, dwell upon that now; and after merely pointing out that that which actually is proposed in Wales appears to be, in fact, a disendowment, by the method, and under the name, of disestablish-

ment, I shall be content to go on, for the present purpose, simply calling the proposal, as it calls itself, a proposal for disestablishment.

What I do desire is to make one or two remarks upon the form of argument by which the measure is urged upon us as an act of necessary justice and right. Practically that argument appears to be addressed to our thought in syllogistic form, thus: In any nationality in which there is a clear national decision for disestablishing, establishment ought to be abolished: Wales is a nationality in which there is a clear national decision for disestablishing: therefore in Wales establishment ought to be abolished.

After what has been already said, I do not desire to argue the major premiss: though I am not sure whether it is sufficiently, as yet, beyond the reach of argument to be generally accepted as the major premiss of an important constitutional argument. As to the minor, it will be observed that it contains two assertions, both of which are assumed, for the purpose of the argument, to be truths beyond challenge. These are, first, "Wales is a nationality," and secondly, "In Wales there is a clear national majority for disestablishing." Now it is necessary to insist that both these statements are assumptions. There is something to be said for each of them. But there is also a good deal to be said against both. They need both of them to be made good by argument. Even supposing that careful argu-

ment could make them both good, assuredly neither of them may be assumed at the beginning of argument.

As to the first proposition, "Wales is a nationality," it seems to me that those who try to watch the whole controversy with dispassionate minds have some reason to complain of the little effort that is made, on either side, to examine seriously into the truth or falsehood of this statement, upon which the whole edifice of argument absolutely depends. It is apt to be assumed, on the one side, that because Wales is a distinct nationality, therefore such and such things follow indisputably. It is apt to be assumed, on the other, that because Wales is not distinct, but an integral part of a larger nationality, therefore certain precisely contradictory conclusions must hold. But though the cogency of either argument depends wholly upon the original aye or no in the fundamental assertion, strangely little effort has been spent upon a serious examination of the truth, or even the meaning of the assertion itself. Is Wales a nationality? What is meant by being a nationality? If it is true, what, and how wide, and how varied, are the consequences which follow from the truth? I must own that it seems to me quite an absurdity to suppose that, if the proposition is true, it can be true for the purpose of disestablishing the Church in that district, and for no other purpose whatever. What national prerogatives has Wales, or ought it to have, if it

is a nationality? It would be arguing in a circle indeed to claim that it has a right to disestablishment because it is a nationality; and then only to be able to define a nationality as that which has a right to claim disestablishment. If the plea is good at all, it must clearly be good for a great deal more than this. I do not desire to be understood as simply denying the claim. Obviously there is a great deal more of real meaning in claiming nationality for Wales than there could be in a similar claim for Devonshire or for Yorkshire. But whatever dim image of truth may lie beneath the words, truth of a singularly indefinable kind, but still not without its own magic of historical and poetical sentiment, it is obvious that the assertion of distinct existence, as a fact of modern politics intended for prosaic and practical use, is beset with enormous difficulties. All that I am concerned at present to do is to insist that when there is obviously a good deal to be said on both sides, neither party to the argument has a right simply to assume its own view, as if it were self-evident. The exact meaning, and the exact truth, of the proposition that Wales is a nationality ought to be fairly faced, argued out, and determined, before either the proposition itself, or its contradictory, is tacitly introduced into a syllogism which is meant to convince.

Is there not, then, some reason to complain that on neither side is the importance of this

necessary task appreciated at its proper value? Of course each side is ready to proclaim, and in some measure to argue for, its own view: but has either seriously grappled with, or tried to do justice to, the amount of truth which underlies the opposite case?

Perhaps it may seem at first sight as if the other assertion, "In Wales there is a clear national majority for disestablishing," were at all events safer as an assertion of fact. It will, no doubt, be urged that an enormous majority of the Welsh members of Parliament are in fact, and were elected because they are, on the side of disestablishment; and, at the same time, that the counting of elected members is the one constitutional and legitimate method of testing the real force of public opinion anywhere. The fact about the Welsh members is, of course, undeniable; but the accompanying doctrine, though it is in some sense true, is not true to the extent, or in the sense, which the argument requires.

Given a real, undisputed nationality — entire, independent, sovereign, legislating for itself with the freedom at once and the responsibility of an imperial people—and I shall grant that it is as unwise as it is unconstitutional to attempt to go behind the verdict of the elections to Parliament. But I cannot admit that it follows that it is in any respect either unconstitutional or unwise for the imperial nation, as a whole, in dealing with any specific portion of the country, to refuse, if

need be, either to frame local legislation in accordance with the most indisputable local desire, or even to assume in all cases that the local parliamentary majority is the only, or of necessity the most trustworthy, evidence of the nature or extent of local desire. It would be a distinct abdication of imperial duty, if Parliament were to accept the principle that because a parliamentary majority of the entire nation cannot but be the ultimate arbiter of national questions, therefore a parliamentary majority in any portion of the nation ought of right to be the final arbiter—or the only evidence—in all questions locally raised. The mere fact that Welsh disestablishment is proposed in the Imperial Parliament, while it necessarily leaves the responsibility of the decision upon imperial, and not locally upon Welsh, members, at the same time destroys the adequacy of the appeal to the local parliamentary majority, as if it were the only, or the final, evidence as to facts and feelings in Wales. It is part of the wisdom and duty of the Imperial Parliament to open its eyes to every form of relevant evidence, not to close them to all but one.

Even in the case of the sovereign nationality the method of counting the elected members is a rough method: it works unevenly; a small majority in the country may produce a large majority in Parliament; it is by no means impossible that a working majority in Parliament

may even be produced by an actual minority of the total aggregate of voters. The parliamentary verdict is, nevertheless, final, not at all because it is perfect, but rather because its finality is a kind of compromise, which in the case of an imperial and responsible people it is more ultimately dangerous to challenge than to accept. Moreover, there are, in this case, at least two palliating considerations: the one, that the very fact that the nationality constitutes a whole, manifold and complete, gives fair ground of hope that mistake or disproportion in one part will be counterbalanced by very different tendencies in another; and the other, that a sovereign Parliament, having of necessity to bear the full burden of its own blunders by virtue of the very fact that it is sovereign, is apt to acquire a deeper sense of responsibility than a local and subordinate council.

Until, then, it has first been settled that Wales is a nation, I cannot admit the legitimacy of either of these two propositions; either, that is, that the counting of its parliamentary members is the only constitutional, or necessarily the best, method of gauging the force of local conviction, or that the local majority, even if it be conceded in fact to the fullest extent, can therefore be called a national majority. But the change of adjectives would be fatal to the minor premiss of the syllogism. Just try how it runs: In every nation in which there is a clear majority for

disestablishing, disestablishment ought to follow: Wales is a *section of* a nation in which there is a clear *local* majority for disestablishing: *ergo* . . . but it is plain that no conclusion will issue at all. Who would dream of allowing that even if the entire population of Kent or Oxfordshire were keen for disestablishing, either Kent or Oxfordshire would therefore be entitled to a local disestablishment?

Thus, then, in the minor premiss of our syllogism, until the first of the two propositions implied has been made good, the second has not yet any relevant meaning. Moreover, it may be pointed out, that until that first proposition may be assumed, the major premiss also is somewhat at fault. For we have been compelled to state it in the awkward form: "In every nation in which there is a clear majority for disestablishing, disestablishment ought to follow"; a form which at once provokes the question—ought to follow by whose act? or at whose hands? No doubt the proposition should have run more simply, "Every nation which has a clear majority for disestablishment is justified in disestablishing." But it would have been too obvious from the first that such a proposition could have no relevancy except to a nation exercising national powers.

It is no part of my present purpose to carry the argument further. I have tried to show that there is a prior question, of no slight magnitude, which must be really resolved, before it is pos-

sible to rule by sweeping principles the intricate and difficult question of Welsh disestablishment. It would be far more in order to determine the principles first, and then to consider the question how far they were locally applicable to Wales, than to bring forward first a local measure of practical revolution in Wales,—without fairly discussing either on what terms disestablishment is nationally right, or what is the equitable relation between disestablishment and disendowment, or whether Wales is a nation ; but with the certainty nevertheless that the decision in Wales, though crudely made upon most entangled issues, will, as a precedent, become, in fact, the tacit affirmation of principles by which the whole country will find itself practically bound. I think, moreover, that I have at least vindicated the relevancy of the plea, which I do not go into,—though I conceive that it has a weight which neither has been, nor can altogether be, at present disposed of,—that any appeal to the fact of immense numerical majority comes with singular lack of grace and ineffectiveness of force from those who have successfully resisted the simplest and most authentic form of numerical scrutiny.

I do not enter at all into narrower particulars ; I do not try, for instance, to measure the crookednesses and enigmas, the hopeless inequalities and elaborate wastefulness of (perhaps) any possible financial proposal in detail ; or, again, to scrutinise the false motives, the jealousies, petti-

nesses, covetousnesses, which sorely threaten to poison the entire proposal, argued upon whatever disinterested principles, with the taint of corroding unrighteousness.

All that I have been really concerned to urge in respect of the particular case of Wales, is that it is impossible rightly to determine, and misleading to raise, any part of the question, unless and until dispassionate consideration has examined and established the principle, without which every part of the argument falls to pieces, that Wales is, in fact as well as in idea, in prose as well as in poetry, a nation with the coherence, the responsibility, and the rights of distinct nationality.

# UNDENOMINATIONALISM AS A PRINCIPLE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

(1902)

THE Education controversy has been a saddening one. So little has there been of mutual understanding, so much of deep-seated, if not determined, suspicion and bitterness. Now there is a pause for a time ; a pause of an uneasy and anxious character.

There are, after all, important questions at stake. There is a most serious question of religious liberty. There is even a question of fundamental theological truth. And the pause in itself seems to constitute something more than an opportunity for reviewing the principles involved. There may seem indeed to be little or no political value or meaning in any words said on the subject so far away from the din of politics, or the assumptions which men call practical. And yet it may possibly be a duty to say them.

There is no need to dwell upon the familiar data of the problem. The fact that education was voluntary before it was national : that it grew up largely from the religious motive, and

under the shadow of the Church : the consequent fact that, when the State set itself to organise education as a whole, it found the field already occupied to a large extent, though by no means adequately, by denominational schools : the fact that one particular religious body, with an immemorial history, has lived in exceptional relation with the State—whether of dependence or of privilege : the fact that Christian denominations in England are sharply sundered one from another (though with varying degrees of sharpness) in their theologies, and their ordinances, and their estimate of the value of ordinances and theologies : the fact that, in spite of all differences, the community as a whole does not desire at all to be either irreligious or non-Christian : these facts, and facts like these, may safely be rather assumed than expounded at large.

The attitude of the community as a whole towards conditions like these has been twofold. First it has tolerated denominational schools. Toleration has included general regulation, an exacting scrutiny as to efficiency, important pecuniary assistance in relation to secular results, and, as far as possible, a complete ignoring of all that constituted denominational or religious value. Side by side with this toleration, which on one side encouraged, while on another side it studiously ignored, "denominationalism"; the community has very largely supplemented all machinery that existed by establishing a large

and ever-increasing system of schools, in the name of the nation, and with practically unlimited command of public money, from which every kind of denominationalism was on principle excluded.

The system, then, has been a dual one. The community has pretty clearly identified itself with the principle of undenominationalism ; while it has tolerated the existence of denominational schools. Its toleration has included subvention, upon conditions, on the whole, of an undenominational kind. But its toleration, and its subventions, have not been such as to promise any permanent continuance of the denominational system. On the contrary, the present crisis largely results from a general recognition that a persistence in the methods of the last thirty years must almost certainly lead to the gradual disappearance of all other than governmental schools.

The present Government bill aims, on the whole, at preventing the disappearance of denominational schools. Probably the larger part of the opposition would prefer that they should disappear. The strength of the opposition rests perhaps mainly in this, that this "undenominationalism" is only the true logical completion of the principle which, on the whole, has been taken for granted as the basis of the national attitude concerning education, since education became a national affair. On the other hand, the difficulty

of the Government position turns largely upon this, that they appear to be endeavouring to counteract an outcome of the basal principle which has been for many years taken nationally for granted, without challenging the justice of the principle itself. It is very difficult to justify a large measure of relief to denominational schools on a basis of undenominational principle. If it is an axiomatic principle that all education provided nationally by the community ought to eschew denominational distinctiveness of every kind; then a national measure for preserving denominational education from being superseded by undenominational is an inconsistency which is open at every turn to the most damaging attacks. To a very large part of the community, strangely enough, the principle just stated does appear to be axiomatic and, indeed, self-evident. No wonder that opponents of the bill are often jubilantly confident in their consistency, and that its supporters, even though they feel themselves at bottom to be right, are conscious of a most uncomfortable uncertainty of logic.

But is the principle true? Is it compatible with any real justice or any real liberalism? So long as national "undenominationalism" appears only as a supplement to a serious machinery of denominational education, the inherent viciousness of its assumptions is less apparent. But when there is danger of its occupying the whole ground, it begins to be easier to discern its real

character. What does undenominationalism, as a principle, imply?

The question, it is to be observed, is about undenominationalism as a principle. Undenominationalism as an accident is quite a different matter. By agreement among individuals for temporary purposes, it would be perfectly possible for Romanists and Anglicans in one direction, or for Congregationalists or Plymouth Brethren and Anglicans in another, to arrange to share common lessons in some particular religious subjects. But the essence of this possibility depends altogether upon the voluntary and limited character of the alliance. It might be possible, even to a considerable extent, to fall back upon "undenominational" methods, avowedly as a *pis aller*, under difficult and undesirable conditions, in the teaching of schools. But undenominationalism as a positive principle, imposed without consent and without limitation; undenominationalism as a sort of higher unity, carrying with it the forcible prohibition of all distinctive teaching, in the teeth of the judgment and conscience of those to whom distinctive teaching is of essential value—it is this which is in question. What does undenominationalism, as a positive and coercive principle, imply? It implies that there is a real essence of Christianity which is capable of being detached alike from all specific forms of dogmatic conviction, and from all particular organisations of government or ministry,

and from all corporate obligations of a sacred society—including, amongst other things, the whole range of sacramental experience. It implies that creeds, ministries, sacraments, corporate responsibilities, and all other such things, whether in themselves more or less desirable, are at most subordinate to, as they are in any case quite separable from, a certain central knowledge and essence of Christianity. The central core, it is conceived, both can be, and is to be, maintained, while the subsidiary expressions, or methods, or outworks, are not only insisted on, but are carefully, and on principle, suppressed.

This distinction between the reality itself, on the one side, and, on the other, all the expressions and methods, and even interpretations, of the reality, is profoundly unphilosophical. The fact that men greatly differ as to interpretations, expressions, and methods, does not in the least degree make it more possible to secure the central reality by dispensing with them all. If impartiality is the object of the community, it is in some other direction than this that impartiality is to be found.

Besides being unphilosophical,—which means really, in the last resort, inherently unpractical,—the effort of undenominationalism is also intensely narrow-minded and unjust. No doubt it is, at the first blush, rather tempting to treat all denominational differences as subordinate. It is the outsider's rough and ready method of attempt-

ing to be rid of all questions which he sees to be difficult, and does not care to understand. But to treat them as subordinate, and to try to dispense with them, is in fact already to pronounce a judgment about them. It is to pronounce them to be at best unimportant, and inherently beset with doubt. Men think of undenominationalism as purely negative, as though it taught nothing at all about the things which it omits. On the contrary, it teaches that they are to be omitted; and this, in respect of such things as creeds, ministries, and sacraments, necessarily amounts to teaching that they are, at the most, immaterial; and this is hardly distinguishable, if distinguishable at all, in experience, from teaching that any earnest teaching about them is positively mischievous because positively false.

It cannot be too often or too strongly insisted that there is no such thing as purely negative teaching. Every negation contains an affirmation, and every omission implies a positive precept. You cannot, by any possibility, forbid the teaching of what is distinctive—which will include all creeds, catechisms, ministries, sacraments, Church duties and privileges, and everything that belongs to Christian theology or experience—without thereby necessarily teaching, through the very prohibition, that insistence on these things may be amiable but must be untrue. You are not only teaching this, but teaching it with a force the more irresistible because it is

silent, and (as it were) automatic. You are teaching a fundamental habit of mind which the pupils whom you mould will never wholly forget. It is only, indeed, by a serious revolt against the whole principle of their own education that they will ever escape from its practical influence. Nor is the position that all denominations are really, in respect of their differences, more or less wrong, a position which makes in fact (as might superficially be supposed) in the direction of a general peace. It makes only towards general contempt for theological definiteness, a general lack of conviction, and superficiality both of character and of mind.

The fact is, that undenominationalism, so far from being really unsectarian in character, is itself an instance of the sectarian spirit in its most exclusive and aggressive form. It is really itself of the nature of an attempt at a new denomination, more latitudinarian and rationalistic in basis, more illiberal and persecuting in method, than any that before exists. It sins so flagrantly against the first principles of liberalism as actually to attempt the suppression by force of the liberty of every denomination other than itself. And the people are, for the moment, so infatuated with a music of soft phrases, as to applaud the attempt, and believe it to be a triumph of large-hearted liberality.

What has been said by no means exhausts the injustice of undenominationalism. It professes

to be at least a measure of equality to all. It is found to be, in working fact, the most galling of inequalities. It only suits precisely the outsider, who, with a sort of vague instinct of religiousness, has no particular principles or convictions. It is, indeed, exactly what he holds to be true. It is an attempt to force his indefiniteness and indifference, by legal compulsion, upon the whole community. It invests him with an importance that is ludicrously undeserved. It does direct injustice, whether more or less, to everyone who has serious convictions upon theological subjects at all.

Meanwhile the injustice which is done to these is very far indeed from being a general equal, or (in that sense) approximately "just" injustice. To a very large number of Nonconformists, and (unfortunately) to a very appreciable number of Church people, it is a comparatively slight injustice; so slight that they feel that little or no real sacrifice is involved in the acceptance of it. Indeed, there are those who even accept it with eagerness as a price which they will readily pay for certain immediate advantages: sometimes even, it is to be feared, for the mere satisfaction of seeing it enforced upon those more thoughtful Church people to whom it is an incalculable wrong.

Why is it an incalculable wrong to anyone? Here is a second point (besides the essentially positive character of every negation), which the

opponents of the bill either generally overlook, or, at all events, make singularly little effort to understand. It is well worth thinking out a little.

There are widely different conceptions as to where the true *differentia* of Christianity lies. There are those to whom Christianity means primarily an exalted moral standard. The Decalogue, or the Sermon on the Mount, or the moral ideal of character exhibited on the Cross—these, as ethical ideals, represent the whole core of the matter. It is a great appeal to men to conform themselves to a certain type of character. The moral ideal is the great thing, and the greatness of the ideal constitutes in itself an effective appeal. Now, of course, this is one absolutely true aspect of Christianity, an aspect inseparable from its central reality. And, since it is so, there is no difficulty whatever in finding the weightiest scriptural testimony to this most necessary and important aspect of the truth. It constitutes perhaps, nowadays, the most superficially popular view of the matter; while it certainly can claim weighty names among professed theologians. But is it the heart of the Gospel? Does the Gospel mean an appeal to motives, a standard of conduct, a rule of life—however lofty, or beautiful, or true, or divine, the appeal as appeal, the standard as standard may be? This is a view of Christianity to which, indeed, churches and ministries and sacraments,

creeds and catechisms and theologies, from the least of them to the greatest of them, may well be made to appear subsidiary and almost irrelevant. But is it, in any sense, distinctively Christian? Of course it is true that the ethical standard of Christianity is at once saner and loftier as ethical standard, than that of any other religion in the world. But it is probably also true that it is in respect of excellence of ethical standard that some non-Christian religions approach most nearly towards a real comparison with Christianity. There are phases alike of Greek philosophy and of Oriental asceticism, which, so far as insight and aspiration go, are very nearly as Christian as Christianity itself. What they lack is not so much moral insight, or the appeal which a moral ideal can make, as any effective means of entering into relation with the ideal. What they lack is power. They see, but they cannot do. They desire, but in the attempt to attain they break to pieces. They are impotent yearning more than they are living experience.

Again, there are those to whom Christianity means primarily a clear knowledge and a loyal acceptance of Bible history as history and as truth;—an acceptance of the Old Testament as preliminary, but more vitally still, an acceptance of the events of the earthly life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. To know these thoroughly, and accept these loyally, as accomplished and significant facts, this is the Christian's great

reality. Now here is a view of Christianity which puts the main stress upon knowledge of certain events. So far it may seem to be a matter of simple teaching. But the knowledge must be believing knowledge; and belief requires something more than study of a text. This conception, then, does not so easily dispense with creeds. For if the facts are more than an appeal to ordinary human motives of conduct, their significance must be expounded theologically. Theology becomes indispensable: and if theology, then orthodoxy also. There must be right understanding; and there must be right belief.

Once more, it may be admitted that this is an absolutely true aspect of Christianity, and that as such, it may be abundantly vindicated alike in Scripture and in Christian experience. Moreover, to speak of these things as *aspects* is more than to allow them a place as *parts* of Christianity. It means that it is quite reasonably possible, for certain purposes, and in certain relations, so to view the whole range of Christianity in the light of either of them that either may seem, for the moment, to be a form or rendering of the whole, and either may in certain contexts be so described. But still, is the heart of what the Christian Gospel means quite adequately expressed either as ideal moral standard, or as belief in the events of the Gospel story,—or even as both combined?

There is a third view of the matter; a view which, while insisting indeed upon the moral appeal which Christianity makes; and insisting upon the vital necessity of faith in the Gospel facts; yet holds that both of these are aspects and outcomes of something else which is even more the *differentia* of Christianity than either of them. This something is living power, a power infused by supernatural gift, a power which qualifies, and informs, and transforms, the natural personality. This power is the Spirit of the Christ, which is the Spirit of God, indwelling in man, and constituting him what, in the Spirit, he is capable of becoming. Belief in this Power is belief in God the Holy Ghost.

The sphere of this Power is corporate and social. The true meaning of the Church of Christ is the Spirit of Christ. The Body is before the individual, and the individual is through as well as within the Body. The normal methods of this Power are sacramental. No doubt the Church can become political and corrupt. Historically it has done so, on a large scale. But this does not touch the true meaning of the Church, which remains the Brotherhood of the Spirit. No doubt God can work outside either Church or Sacraments; and the Sacraments, like the Church, can be abused by the grossest superstitions and degraded by mechanical use. But *abusus non tollit usum*. The Church remains after all the Brotherhood of the

Spirit ; and the Sacraments remain the outward channels, by Divine appointment, of Spiritual Life.

Now, according to this third view, it is the supernatural life, the life of power, the life which is the meaning of the Church, the life of which Sacraments (spiritually conceived and received) are the normal channels, the life which is the Spirit, and therefore is Christ ; it is this, and this alone, which constitutes the possibility of true faith in the Gospel story, and which constitutes the possibility of any real relation, in personal experience, with the moral ideal of Christianity. It is into this that a child is baptized at the first. In the fulness of this he is sealed in confirmation. The devout communicant life is this. This is the faith, which is also the experience, in which, and to which, he is nurtured in the Church. It is this which is administered, in and by the Body, through the divinely authorised ministers of the Body. It is this which is guarded, explained, familiarised, in creeds, catechisms, theologies. And this is the only access into anything else. Cut off this, this living faith, this living experience of the Holy Ghost in the Church, and the Gospel story becomes, at most, only a very touching and beautiful, but quite unattainable, episode in history ; and the moral and spiritual standard of Christianity becomes, as such, an overwhelming despair.

Of course, it is here implied that this third view represents, and has always been, the unexaggerated and unhesitating faith of the Church of Christ. But it is not necessary for the present purpose to attempt to argue that it is true. On the other hand, it is not the least relevant as an answer to all this, if anyone chooses to think that it is false. It is quite enough that, whether rightly or wrongly, it is firmly believed to be the truth by scores of thousands of good Churchmen and citizens. And I think it may fairly be pleaded also for the purpose that, so far from showing any sign of being a merely vulgar prejudice of the more ignorant, it is held most characteristically and clearly, in this as in almost every earlier generation, by those who, as saints and as theologians, have entered most deeply into the inner knowledge of Christian faith and experience. *Cuique in sua arte credendum.* This is what, speaking broadly, saints have meant by saintliness, and theologians have understood as theology. It is supernatural Power. It is the non-self, or that which had been outside the self, and known to the self almost wholly in the way of contrast, now more and more essentially characterising the self.

To return to the inherent injustice of undenominationalism. Undenominationalism would in practice prohibit the whole of the teaching which alone, to this third point of view, gives either meaning or possibility to the other aspects

of Christianity. The earthly events of the Gospel story might be known: but there could be no exposition of the work of the ascended Christ; no unfolding of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost; no appreciation of the Church as what it is; no experience of the Sacraments as what they ought to be. The Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount might be taught, but only as a standard, that is, as Law, not Gospel. The ideal might be held up. But of the experience of Power, by which alone the ideal would become possible, there could be no real word. To those who see no great importance in Church or creeds or ministries or sacraments, it may seem no great injustice to insist on treating them as immaterial accessories. But what is the injustice to those to whom they constitute the real intelligence and possibility of all the rest? It is not that the Churchman undervalues moral character, or wants to have Church observance added on to it also, whether as of higher or of lower value. It is no question at all of Sacraments *as an addition* to character; but of the Holy Ghost as the one possibility of character. The devout communicant does not look down on the life of simple goodness as inadequate; but his communion is to him as the core of his experience of Christ, and, therefore, of any simplicity of goodness. What adequate measure can there be of the injustice of the suppression of all distinctive Church teaching, in the interest of those who dissent from it,

to those to whom the Christian ethical standard and even the events of the Gospel story would, apart from the experience of the Pentecostal Church, be a dream without hope or power?

But if the undenominational method, adopted as a positive principle, and enforced by compulsion of law upon those who regard it with abhorrence, is found to be so profoundly unphilosophical in basis and so gallingly unjust in incidence; where is the remedy? An education law has become in modern times the business of the community as a whole. The community as a whole does not believe in the Church, and Churchmanship cannot be imposed upon the community. Of course it cannot. The community as a whole can only be perfectly just by being perfectly impartial between denominations. Such perfect impartiality can never be attained by imposing upon them all what is unjust to almost all of them, but unjust in almost incredibly unequal degrees of injustice. How, then, can it be obtained? By precisely the opposite method: the method which gives expression to the only true justice, the only true liberalism; the method of rigidly impartial denominationalism.

The community as a whole need not be, and is not, indifferent to religion. It need not, and does not, acquiesce in deliberately non-Christian education. But it must deal with the fact which, whether deplorable or not, is at all events fundamental for the purpose, that Christians are sharply

divided from one another. It is not, then, to be impartial as between religious and irreligious education. In England, at least, it does not need to be impartial as between Christian and non-Christian education. But so long as the different forms of Christianity differ as they do differ, it cannot wisely identify itself for this purpose with any one denomination more than another. Least of all can it, without frantic unwisdom, invent a new denomination of its own, under whatever specious title, and identify itself wholly with that. It is necessary to insist the more clearly upon the duty of impartiality, because, as a matter of history, the religious body known as the Church of England has had, or been supposed to have, as the nationally "Established Church," some special, if not exclusive, right to be the exponent and standard of the national religion; and because it was, to an indefinitely large extent, from the religious motive, and under the shadow of this Church, that the fabric of national education in England grew up. It would, therefore, have been perfectly natural if, in the earlier stages of the education controversy, some claim had been put forward, on the Church side, for exceptional rights over public education. But any shadow of such claim is definitely at an end. Whatever Establishment may still mean for other purposes, at least in relation to national education the disestablishment of the Church is an absolutely accomplished

fact. Not a shadow of claim is, or is to be, put forward by Churchmen for Churchmen in this matter, which they would not put forward as emphatically in England for every other Christian body—and probably elsewhere, say in India, for instance, for every non-Christian religious body that was morally and politically tolerable.

How is the community to maintain its attitude of religious impartiality among denominations? Not by superseding them all, or trying the impossible task of inventing a new one. But by treating them all with respect, and with precise equality of respect. Respect will mean, in this matter, something more than cold toleration. It will mean something like this.

The State, as State, will desire the education of all its citizens. The State, as State, will recognise that the education which it desires means not only the acquisition of knowledge, but also, and even more importantly, a real training of moral character. The State, as State, will recognise that the basis of moral character is religious experience. The State, as State, will therefore, for its own purposes, not tolerate, but most earnestly desire, the religious training of all its citizens. But the State will recognise that, as State, it cannot provide religious conviction or experience. Religion can only be taught, with real effect, by those to whom it is a definite reality. For religious training the State must look, in the nature of things, to the bodies which are animated

by religious conviction. The State is not, and cannot make itself, a Church. The State can, of course, if it pleases, select any form of Church, and confer upon it exclusive privileges. Even so, for the religious impulse, it would have to look wholly to that Church. The State might support, but could not be, that Church.

But in point of fact, in respect of education at least, we have reached a point in England at which this exclusive choice of any one denomination has become inconceivable. The State must remain impartial amongst denominations. And yet it must look to the denominations for the religion which for itself it intensely needs, but which it cannot, save through them, supply. The State desires religious citizens. The purpose of the State would therefore be served best of all if schools avowedly denominational, and educating on the basis of religious conviction, could cover the whole ground. The State does not decide whether Anglicanism is better than Wesleyanism, or Wesleyanism better than Agnosticism. But the State does realise that religious conviction is better than indifference. It would be served best if all the Anglicans in it were convinced and religious Anglicans, and the Romans religious Romans, and the Wesleyans religious Wesleyans, and the Congregationalists religious Congregationalists, and so on to the end; the Agnostics conscientious Agnostics, the Mahommetans scrupulously true as Mahom-

metans, the Buddhists thoroughly sincere and aspiring Buddhists.

This is denominationalism. It is utterly different in principle from an establishment, in the first instance, of a great system at the public expense of "undenominational Christianity"; and the toleration, in the second instance, on exceedingly unequal terms, of denominational schools. This would put denominational schools as the thing first and most to be desired—not from the point of view only of the denominations severally, but from the point of view of the community as a whole. On this basis a measure to preserve denominational schools from extinction by national action would lack no logic and require no apology. And this, in principle, is the true way of reconciling the maintenance of religion with a strictly impartial neutrality among forms of religion. It is probably the only effective mode of conservation. It is certainly the only true liberalism. It is only this which treats different forms of Christianity with respect; and with precise equality of respect. The forcible exclusion from national education of all definiteness of religious creed, even if it could be conceived to be otherwise desirable, is essentially incompatible with liberal principle. And it is astonishing to try and follow the processes by which so-called "liberalism" has been seduced into the ways of extreme religious intolerance.

Denominational schools, then, as such, should

be, to the true liberal, the most to be desired,—(including, if it be so, amongst them, the "undenominational" sect)—and certainly, where such schools already existed, they would be the first and most to be encouraged and sustained by the State.

But it is true, no doubt, that denominational schools, however liberally encouraged by the State, do not and cannot cover the whole ground. It becomes, therefore, matter of national necessity to supplement them, in the second instance, by schools belonging to no denomination in particular. But these schools should not, therefore, forget the importance of the denominational principle to national well-being. In these schools, no less than in the former, though many denominations meet in them, it should be the denominational principle which the State should most earnestly desire to carry out in every possible way. Wherever and however it were possible, all facility should be given for the provision of denominational instruction for the children of all sorts of denominations. The whole of the direct religious instruction should be—if only it could be—denominational.

But this again would be too much to be practically hoped for. Denominationalism, that is to say, organised religious conviction really definite and really alive, though encouraged to do the utmost that it could, would necessarily, it is to be feared, leave very much undone. It is in that

case only, as the third alternative, to be fallen back upon as a makeshift, when both the more desirable methods have unhappily broken down, that there is a real place for "undenominational" teaching, that is, for the attempt to give some general foundation of religious knowledge, with a neutral intention, and apart from any particular convictions or ordinances. There may be very considerable importance in such teaching of religious knowledge, if conscientiously given, where more serious training in religion is unhappily impossible. Whether more satisfactory or less, it would at least be an honest attempt to supply deficiency, not a piece of religious oppression. As has been said already, it is undenominationalism all round, undenominationalism as a positive principle, with the positive prohibition of more serious training in religion, which is a tyranny wherever it is imposed by compulsion, and a tyranny of more and more galling character, just in proportion as the convictions which it overrides are more and more specific and profound.

There is a further point about which it is important to speak plainly. If denominational schools of all kinds were present everywhere, no doubt every such school might be absolutely confined to children of its own denomination. But in point of fact it happens every day that children of one form of faith are, through pressure of necessity of one kind or another, practically compelled to attend a school whose principles their

parents do not approve. And there is a great number of parishes in which there is, and can be, only one school, although there may be many denominations. In such cases it is most important, for denominational principle, that provision should be made for the full maintenance of denominational liberty. And therefore it is matter of the most profound regret to many Churchmen that the Bill was introduced without an express enactment of the principle that, in any or every primary school in the land, parents might lawfully provide religious instruction for their own children in accordance with their own faith. It is important, for that equity toward Dissenters which is essential to liberal principles, that this liberty should be secured wherever there is one school only, and that one school is Anglican. It is no less important, for that equity towards Churchmen which is essential to liberal principles, that the same liberty should be secured, wherever there is one school only, and that one school is Dissenting or is "undenominational."

There would, of course, be difficulty of all sorts in detail. You cannot suddenly equalise conditions everywhere, especially when the inequalities which exist are largely the outcome of a long and serious history. But it is the principle which matters—the principle of perfect religious fairness. Once get the principle true, and just, and illuminating; and much can be done, after all, in the way of making the best of difficulties

in detail. Such a provision was an essential feature in the scheme that commended itself to the Committees of the Convocations in July, 1901. Its omission is a grievous wound alike to the logic and to the fairness of the bill. Its omission has done much to clothe a measure of justice to the Church with the aspect of a measure of injustice to the Dissenters.

The present bill is of the nature of a national attempt to prevent the abolition of denominational schools. The instinct of at least a large part of the community recognises that so far its object is true and good. But it is, or is very largely supposed to be, an attempt to maintain them upon the old false hypothesis—or at least without any challenge or reversal, and therefore in apparent subordination to the old false hypothesis—that denominational definiteness is only as a sort of private fancy, to be tolerated in certain individual bigots or enthusiasts, but that the whole national policy and the whole public machinery must of course be "undenominational." The new measure is not easily compatible with the old hypothesis. No wonder that upon the old hypothesis it has largely failed to convince, and even given new heart and cohesion to the professional opponents of the Government.

The present bill may conceivably be the best practical way of attempting to do what certainly needs most urgently to be done. But as things

stand, it is no wonder if it does not seem a very perfect measure to anyone. And certain it is that it is infinitely perilous. It seems to aim at saving denominational schools from abolition. But a very little alteration, such as those which were proposed on clause 7 in great numbers, would convert it outright into a measure for the ultimate, if not immediate, undenominationalising of denominational schools, which would be their abolition as denominational. So altered, the bill would be a measure of deadly hostility to the whole system which it seems to be designed to protect. Yet the alteration seems a plausible one, because the present fashion of thought, the average unexamined presupposition of argument, is for the most part antidenominational. For precisely the same reason, the alteration, if made, could hardly fail, in the present average temper, to be fatal in its working. The present popular temper has little respect for religion which it does not understand. It thinks it admirably just to control by the voice of the majority the consciences of all. The alterations, as urged, would everywhere make the average majority supreme—even within the special work of the minorities. But indeed, whether, under the circumstances of the moment, they appear to be plausible or no, the alterations as urged, are, in themselves, amazing. It comes to this, that a measure may be passed for keeping denominational schools, as denomi-

national, alive, provided they cease to be managed denominationally. What could be the use, or sense, of denominational schools, if the denominational principle were surrendered once for all? It is the attempt to conserve denominational schools on an apparent basis of undenominational presupposition, which makes possible this most paradoxical claim that denominationalism itself shall be undenominational! Truly the presupposition of undenominationalism leads to strange conclusions. But it is this presupposition of undenominationalism which is really the primary untruth.

Is it mere waste of time to denounce, as primary untruth, what has been, and is, so largely taken for granted as axiomatic? Is it an absolutely vain crying in the wilderness? Perhaps so. Certainly these pages are not written under any illusion as to probabilities. They are written rather under pressure of conscience than with any special hope of usefulness.

But the very fact that the general mind is dominated so largely by this idea may serve to illustrate the principle—if any illustration be needed—that it is ideas, as such, which, whether for good or for mischief, do dominate the world. It is in the principle that the importance lies. Opponents will concede a good deal, in practice, for the moment, to denominational schools, provided that the principle of undenominationalism be paramount. They are perfectly right in their

estimate of the comparative value of ideal principle. And conversely, the most convinced Churchmen might accept a good deal of neutral, undenominational effort in practice, provided only that it were done in strict subordination to the denominational principle—the principle of real religious liberty. The real conflict is a conflict of principles, of ideals; and the conflict of principle is the conflict that matters. It is religious liberty which is at stake. It is religious liberty which Churchmen really claim—for themselves alike and for all.

The dominance of ideas is conspicuous in every department of popular history. Most peoples have had their innate ambitions or antipathies. Again and again there have been places or times in which some one broad generalisation or other has so completely dominated the general imagination and, as it were, possessed the very atmosphere of thought, that any protest on the other side sounded, to the popular ear, like a voice of foolishness, to be laughed down rather than to be considered seriously. So verbal inspiration has had its day; and unlimited Church authority; and unlimited individualism; and materialism; and philosophic utilitarianism; and the root principle "every man's hand against every man" as a scientific basis of economics or of politics. It is ideas like these—or (too often) prejudices more degraded and ignorant than these, but not less sweeping in momentary

power—which seem to men in their day almost self-evident; which sweep men along with irresistible power; which it is thought almost idiocy to disbelieve, and sheer madness to challenge. There is nothing in the world so practical, so irresistible in practice, as an idea once fully accepted as principle. And now undenominationalism seems to sway the public mind, in the manner of ideas like these. Men do not examine it. They assume it. And by that assumption they test and judge all rival theories.

Our contention, then, is in the region of ideal principles. Ideals do not always show their full import at the first. But they work themselves out with a relentless exactness, from which, sooner or later, there is no escaping. False ideals carry their own fatal nemesis. The materialistic hypothesis, or the utilitarian, or the fatalistic, or the agnostic, work, in one way or another, bitter havoc in the powers of the spiritual life. And similarly it is to be feared,—or something more than feared,—that undenominationalism, once established as sovereign principle,—plausible though it may seem, and obviously just and delightful to the average imagination at the moment,—would mean ultimately the decay and death of all specific religious conviction, and therefore also, at the last, of all really religious character.

# THE INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCH COURTS

## A LETTER TO THE DEAN OF CHRIST CHURCH

(1899)

My dear Dean,

It is said that the Convocation of Canterbury, of which you are a member, will next week be invited to consider important proposals in connection with the work of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, appointed in 1881. I hope you will allow me at such a moment to ask your attention to the contents of a pamphlet on the subject, which I was bold enough to write, as Vicar of Great Budworth, in the early weeks of 1886.

You will not, I hope, think that I am interfering with things that are beyond my reach. I am not dreaming, of course, of criticising any practical measures, of which I cannot fully know whether they are, or are not, to be proposed; and can much less know the exact, or even the general, contents and character. But for that very reason this would seem to be a moment at which it is exceptionally convenient to call attention to some underlying principles; and, I must add, to some fallacies as to underlying principles,

which have (it is to be feared) an almost exclusive possession of the minds of men in this country, who rely (as for practical purposes I admit that men are often almost compelled to rely) rather upon current impressions than upon careful thought of their own.

One such current fallacy meets me, alas! in pages no less representative than those of this last week's *Guardian*, as a "principle which in" its "general outline must be frankly recognised if any good is to come of the proposed legislation." It is the belief, held largely in this country, without the least examination, because it is honestly believed to be a self-evident axiom, that the national establishment of a Church necessarily means the subordination of its judical procedure, in the last resort, to the review of the secular power. If this belief, instead of being assumed as self-evident, were seriously examined, the formidableness of its power would quickly dissolve. Happily the evidence is close at hand by which it can be proved, to absolute demonstration, that neither establishment in the abstract, nor establishment under the British Crown and Constitution in particular, is for a moment incompatible with a real freedom of either Church councils or Church courts. There is one other Church besides our own, which has been all this time, and is at this moment, nationally established, on British soil and under the British Crown. In it no appeal lies from the

Church courts to the secular power. *Because the Church is established under Royal Supremacy*, therefore the supreme court of the Church represents the Sovereign in the act of speaking the last word for Church purposes, in precisely the same way in which, for civil purposes, the judgment of the secular court of appeal is the Sovereign speaking her[1] last word. There is no more appeal from the highest ecclesiastical court to the Sovereign, than there is from the highest secular court to the Sovereign : nor does the absence of appeal infringe the sovereignty of the Sovereign in the one case any more than in the other. There is no more appeal from the highest ecclesiastical to the highest civil court than there is from the highest civil court to the highest ecclesiastical. I am speaking, of course, of the Established Church of Scotland. If anyone would take the moderate pains required to read the article by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in the recent volume of *Essays on Church Reform,* he would find it a simple impossibility ever again to assert that the ultimate dependence of Church courts upon secular revising was in any sense a necessary element in, or consequence of, establishment. On the contrary, I fearlessly assert that it is a direct infringement of what national establishment does, of right, either historically or logically mean. It was not even in England the real meaning of the theory, either

[1] [written in 1899]

of King Henry VIII or Queen Elizabeth, on the one hand, or of the Churchmen who accepted the principle of Royal Supremacy, on the other. I speak positively as the directest method of challenging inquiry on this matter. And meanwhile I protest against the use of language, by those who take either—or any—point of view in the approaching discussions, as if there were any reason whatever in the nature of things why English Churchmen should lay down a principle so inherently untrue as this.

I am not one of those who regard the maintenance of establishment as being, in principle at least, of capital importance. The reasons for shrinking from the responsibility of disestablishing are indeed serious: but they are practical and historical (to my mind) rather than of abstract theory. The point is one as to which I hold that a Churchman, at least *as Churchman*, should be neutral. But in any case disestablishment is always open to the nation. Because (if it be so) the nation disapproves of the legislative or judical development of the Church; because the nation considers that the Church has become, or is becoming, other than that which it had at first meant, or is willing now, by establishment to recognise and endorse; or, indeed, for any other cause, good, bad, or indifferent—it is open to the nation to disestablish, at any moment, a Church with which it no longer wishes its national life and procedure to be identified. If

the nation wishes no longer to accept the organisation of the Church as an aspect of itself; if it declines to accept Church legislature, Church judicature, Church corporate life with all the corollaries that are necessary to the corporate life of the Church—the first step in logic and equity would be to disestablish.

I have tried once before, and am certainly not trying now, to discuss, on its merits, the problem of disestablishing. But so long as establishment remains, let it be clearly understood that establishment is a condition not of servitude, but of privilege. However far I may be from advocating disestablishment, I am quite sure that the Church's worst enemies are those who would conserve establishment as a means of controlling and enthralling the Church. The existing condition in Scotland is the true and direct outcome, in logic and equity, of the idea of establishment, and of the principle (I do not say of the practice) of the Tudor Sovereigns in England. It is by a tacit growth, the result largely of inattention and accident, that establishment has come to be, in England, the expression of a principle which precisely contradicts its proper meaning; and yet is now genuinely believed, by I know not what majority of intelligent people, to be as irreversible as a law of nature, or as self-evident as an axiom of Euclid.

I should indeed be very far from admitting that the loss of freedom to legislate for herself,

and conduct her own justice, within the things which properly belong to her sphere, would rightly or reasonably follow even from the disestablishment of the Church. The Church in America, a purely voluntary association in a democratic state, is for these purposes no less substantially free than the Established Church in Scotland; though of course not armed, like the Scottish Establishment, with the majesty of national recognition and secular power. If the instinct of modern thought is wholly wrong in supposing that a Church should be the less free because it is established; it is at least right in assuming that a non-established Church ought to be free. Strange to say, even this, though true elsewhere, is far from being true, according to existing tradition and practice, in England. But I must not enter into detail on these points. This letter, at least, is meant rather to draw attention to them than to argue them. There is something more about them in the pamphlet which I venture to send: not based, of course, on any expert knowledge of my own, but on that which the Blue Book of the Commission of 1881 made public to the world.

I will only add here that, when I speak of "ecclesiastical" legislature or judicature, I am far from meaning, of necessity, the legislation or the judgment of what are commonly called "ecclesiastics." The place of Church laymen, as Church laymen, in Church courts or councils,

though immensely important, is yet, in principle, a question of detail. An ecclesiastical council, committee, or court, is one (however constituted in detail) which is, for the purpose in hand, the genuine outcome and *bona fide* representative of the Church.

Meanwhile there is one other form of the fallacy I have spoken of, to which attention is not drawn directly in the pamphlet, which I will ask leave, for that reason, to make plain here.

It is very frequently supposed that even if Royal Supremacy does not absolutely require an appeal from the highest ecclesiastical to a secular court; yet at least some reference to such a court or committee may be justified as if it were part of a (supposed) inherent visitatorial power in the Crown, or as if it were parallel to the historical principle of the *appel comme d'abus* in the Gallican Church. The inherent visitatorial authority of the Crown in respect of ecclesiastical judicature will be more convincing when it is an established principle and practice in respect of secular judicature. Whether anything of the kind might be tolerable in principle, or in policy, if the historic Church in England were disestablished, is open to argument. But it has certainly no legitimate place while the courts ecclesiastical are themselves the Queen's[1] courts for ecclesiastical matters.

And the reference to the Gallican Church and

[1] [written in 1899]

the *appel comme d'abus* is altogether fallacious. The *appel comme d'abus* was the national self-protection against an extra-national system of judicature. As long as Church courts rested ultimately on a basis not national but foreign; as long as their system of canon law was in the main a foreign system, and the ultimate sanction and authority which lay behind the administration of it was the authority and sanction of the Roman court, that is to say, of an irresponsible foreign power, claiming to be more august than the national sovereignty; so long it was an imperative necessity that the national sovereignty should have some mode of checking and limiting Church courts. No doubt in practice, when the Crown was strong, the *appel comme d'abus* gave the Crown an almost unlimited opportunity of interference,—unreasonable as well as reasonable. But so long as the basis of the Church's authority was foreign, some visitatorial power on the part of the Crown, some power of review and veto in the name of the nation, was indispensable for national freedom. Now no such machinery of protective veto is, or can be, necessary to guard the freedom of the nation or Crown against a judicature, which is already the judicature of the Crown itself. There is nothing at all of an Erastian nature in acknowledging, what is as true in principle as it is in practice, that all power of exercising a public jurisdiction within the nation comes

ideally from the ideal source of all national jurisdiction,—that is, from the Crown. There is no other source of jurisdiction in this realm, within the region of material things, except only —I do not say (where a Church is nationally established) the secular power, but the Sovereign, who is the sole executive head, whether of secular power or of ecclesiastical. The Sovereign has no need of a power of visitatorial scrutiny to check or to veto herself.[1]

Royal Supremacy represents one theory, the theory of a jurisdiction exclusively national. The *appel comme d'abus* represents another, and an incompatible, theory, the theory of an extra-national jurisdiction in Church courts. It must be one theory or the other. The *appel comme d'abus* cannot illustrate, or proceed from, Royal Supremacy. To try to combine these two incompatible principles, or to make the one the method of the other, is mere confusion.

Such machinery, then, as this is quite illogical in a Church established under Royal Supremacy. It would be illogical also in a disestablished Church.

Nevertheless, though I have been driven to write under stress of conviction that some of these most fundamental principles are generally neither recognised nor believed in at all; I am sincerely anxious, on the other hand, to disclaim the presumptuous desire of interfering with the efforts

[1] [written in 1899]

of my betters to handle practical difficulties in a practical way. And, therefore, if anyone should urge that, in view of its unique national history in the past, the Church of England, if disestablished, would still hold so mighty a position within the nation that some machinery analogous more or less to the *appel comme d'abus*, though corresponding neither to precedent or principle, might yet be as a political expedient wise, if not permanently, yet during a period of transition and experiment; I should not be very careful to resist the contention. I will go one step further, and venture to add that even if, on somewhat kindred grounds, such an expedient should be proposed in an established Church, as for the moment prudent diplomatically, though in principle unconstitutional and irregular; even that might lie outside my present argument. I scrupulously abstain from saying one word in the region of present practical politics. I am only endeavouring to protest against false theories of constitutional principle. But, at least, if anything should be proposed on politic grounds, which is irregular and illogical in principle, I may urge that it is of the highest practical importance that it should be advocated rather as being, what it is, a politic irregularity, than as if it were, what it is not, an illustration or outcome of principles constitutionally true.

I cannot but hope that my disclaimer of any desire to enter (save by clearing fundamental

principles) within the region of immediate practical politics, may moderate somewhat of the grave displeasure which perhaps I must on some sides expect as the penalty of venturing to speak at all. But at least in parting I may say, in general terms, that I write as one who is sincerely convinced that the difficulties of the Church in what is called her present crisis—(it is strange how few parishes through the length and breadth of the land are conscious, newspapers apart, of any crisis at all)—will be settled in the best, the wisest, and the most permanent manner, by the unfettered action of the Church herself. They will be settled effectively just in proportion as it becomes freely possible, in the present and the future, for the Church herself, in councils and courts of her own, without imported excitement or pressure from the outside, to work out by degrees, with all the gravity of the responsible action of a body that is effectively self-governing, the methods and the needs, the judgment and the discipline, of her own life.

Forgive me, if you can, for my sudden intrusion upon you. I do not of course venture to presume upon your agreement in the things which I have said. But, indeed, I only wish that I could hope to be as indulgently interpreted by others as I am sure that I shall be by you.

Yours affectionately,

R. C. MOBERLY.

Ch. Ch.,
Jan. 30, 1899.

# IS THE INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCH COURTS REALLY IMPOSSIBLE?

(1886)

"THAT religion should be absolutely free from State control is impossible." This principle, in one form of phrase or another, is so familiar just now upon the lips and in the minds of men, that it is worth while to distinguish some of the possible meanings which may underlie it. The words themselves are borrowed from a recent Charge of Archdeacon Palmer's ; and their context in that Charge may suggest at once a distinction which will be convenient at the outset. After asserting the principle Archdeacon Palmer goes on: "The well-known example of the Indian Thugs will illustrate my position. A State cannot tolerate murder, because there is a set of men within its borders who believe it to be the fittest expression of devotion to the deity of their choice. Another instance nearer home may be adduced. Polygamy is a cherished practice with the Mormons. Yet surely it is not wrong for a civilised nation to forbid the reintroduction of such a practice." If these be accepted as illustrations interpretative of the meaning of the principle, the

principle itself will readily be conceded. But what in that case does the principle mean? It means that whereas it is essential to the constitution of a State to prevent certain kinds of action which would injure the State, it would become necessary for the State to interfere with any religion which should inculcate or encourage such actions. Not even religion would be a sufficient defence for actions which are, *per se*, offences against the laws of a civilised community. The very statement implies a certain instinct that the rules and constitutions of religion should, *prima facie*, be held to be outside of the cognizance of the State. Only it is asserted that this natural presumption might conceivably be rebutted; that it is not a truth so absolute as to be incapable of exception; that in certain extreme cases, capable of being hypothesised, the natural immunity of religion might and would be overruled, the State might and would so far overthrow the proper order and distinctions of things as to interfere and coerce within the sphere of religion. The emphasis is upon the word "absolutely": "That religion should be absolutely," *i.e.* under all conceivable circumstances, and in all its conceivable aspects, so only that it could claim the name of religion, "free from State control is impossible."

Now in such a sense as this the principle is an undoubted truth. And because there is a sense in which it is true, therefore the words themselves cannot be denied. And because they cannot be

denied, therefore the statement remains, and is apt to be appealed to as a fundamental axiom in discussion about the relation of the Church to the State. But then the words are ambiguous. And there can be little doubt that the ordinary conception of their meaning, as they are generally used in such arguments, is something extremely different from that which has just been stated.

"That religion should be absolutely free from State control is impossible." We know that under existing laws and customs in England no religious body is free from State control. This is the case, in point of fact, in a very much wider sense than that just given. It is not only that under the administration of our law no religious body is allowed to interfere with the fundamental moralities of social and national life, but that in all disputed cases whatever, within the circle of any religious body, the civil courts are in fact the ultimate courts of appeal.

Many typical cases of disputes in Dissenting congregations have within recent years illustrated this fact. If only the dispute be persisted in, its decision will come at last from the civil judge, however many subtle questions of ecclesiastical polity, or of theological doctrine, may be involved in the decision. That this is so in fact has been abundantly insisted on in recent controversy.

I quote two or three sentences from an article, which is full of information on the subject, published in the *Church Quarterly Review* of

April, 1885: "Our contention is that Nonconformists are hopelessly subject to the jurisdiction of the State courts for the interpretation of the doctrines in their trust-deeds, and absolutely subject to the discretion of Parliament for their alteration." "Even then [i.e. if they should resign all their property in order to purchase freedom] the Dissenting communities would not be free from State control in matters of religion, for, after all, in such a case there would still remain some necessity in their purely voluntary and non-property-holding communities to exercise discipline, and in relation to their exercise of this right they would still be liable to have their ecclesiastical proceedings reviewed, and their sentences, if need be, reversed by any judge of the civil court to whom an aggrieved party might make an appeal according as we have shown." Again, "It would be sufficient for the purpose of his argument to admit that State control, such as we have described, does not extend beyond the question of interest in property. But though such an admission would be sufficient for the purposes of the argument, it would not be an adequate admission and representation of all the facts of the case, for the truth is that State control extends to questions of discipline of a purely voluntary society, meeting in a weekly-rented upper room, holding no property, and having, as a society, no interest in property whatever." And finally, with reference to the

"Huddersfield case": "Never was the subjection, absolute and helpless, of any religious body in its religious concerns more manifestly and unquestionably complete; and the more the case is inquired into and discussed, the more readily and candidly this will be admitted by all persons whose minds are open to the irresistible force of the facts stated, which overwhelmingly show that in such a case there is no getting away from State control in matters of religion, even by those who imagine that they are altogether free from it."

Now when facts like these are loudly insisted on; when they are urged upon us as arguments of immense force to show not only that the independence of the Church of England *would* not, but that it *could* not be attained, either by any smaller change, nor even by the formal separation of "Church" and "State"—as they have been urged on many a Diocesan Conference platform, and in many a private discussion; and when in this connexion words are used like those which in a limited sense were admitted just now, "that religion should be absolutely free from State control is impossible"; is it not plain that the words themselves have begun to carry a totally different force and meaning from that which we admitted? They have now become the erection into an abstract principle, and the enunciation in the form of a necessary axiom, of that rule of procedure which is asserted in the extracts just given—and no doubt asserted truly—to be the

existing practice of the English courts. They now lay down that it is inevitable, in the nature of things, that any questions, religious or otherwise, in any religious community, established or non-established, must (if the dispute be sufficiently persevered in) come up, for their really ultimate decision, before the court of the civil power. Is it at all too much to say that it is in this sense, and with this purpose, that maxims like that which has been quoted are continually being laid down?—laid down as at once of indisputable authority, and as the basis alike of many arguments, and of many homilies?

We have now reached the precise question which it is the purpose of this paper to raise. The question is this: Is it in the least necessary in the nature of things, or is it in the least desirable, that questions of Church discipline (such as almost all the "disputes" in religious communities practically are) should receive their last word of settlement from civil courts? I decline to be answered by any evidence as to what does happen in our law-courts now, whether in reference to the Established Church or to Dissenters. I am ready to concede absolutely that this is the existing and traditional maxim and practice of English courts. That fact is, of course, a weighty one. But whatever may be the exact significance of that fact, I deny that it is any proof that the thing is necessary in the nature of things, or that it could not possibly be otherwise.

I deny that it is any adequate justification for that popular sense which would, I believe, at present be almost universally understood to attach to such a maxim as "That religion should be absolutely free from State control *is impossible.*"

Does the received practice of the English courts represent in this matter what is absolutely necessary or right?

That it is by no means necessary in the nature of things is indeed a proposition easily demonstrable. But I submit that any such demonstration, however obvious it may be, is at this moment of very real importance. The circumstances of the present time make it exceedingly desirable that the minds of Churchmen should look forward as clearly as possible to the issues, and to the different alternatives which may open themselves in the future. But so long as it is at all generally supposed that the ultimate determination of its religious questions by civil courts is a necessity which no religious community can escape, so long the whole conception as to the conditions of the future problem, and as to the lines upon which we ought even now to be advancing to meet the future, is, in one most important respect, fatally prejudiced and overclouded. And yet at this moment I venture to submit that it *is*, very generally indeed, so supposed; that is to say, that it is really a general belief not only that the courts do act in this way, but that there is no alternative possible but that

they should act in this way: I submit that this supposition does, in effect, go a very long way towards preventing Churchmen in general from even considering how far the present condition of things in this respect is, or is not, desirable (for no doubt it is futile to argue upon the desirableness of what could not be otherwise); I submit that the prevailing supposition has really no other ground than the admitted fact of the present English maxim and practice: and I submit, finally, that if once the phantom of its supposed necessity were really and completely dissipated, there are grounds for thinking that the wisdom of the English people, as it ceased to think the existing practice a necessity, might very probably cease also to think it in any degree desirable or wise.

If the present condition is arbitrary, and not necessary, what other alternatives are open beside it?

I am concerned only to make clear my alternative, without staying to ask whether it is, or is not, the only form of alternative possible. And I may add that, at the present stage, I am only bound to show that an alternative is fairly conceivable. Whether it would or would not be also reasonably practicable in this country or in this generation, is a question which I do not as yet profess to have reached.

But surely a condition of society is at least imaginable in which ecclesiastical societies would

be allowed to frame their own rules of discipline, and to carry them out, deciding for themselves all questions that might rise within their own body as to the doctrine, ritual, or procedure,—discontents or complaints of aggrieved individual members or ministers notwithstanding. Of course there would be a limit to the scope of ecclesiastical discipline. The religious tribunals might pronounce whether an accused man was, or was not, heretical—was, or was not, capable of retaining his post as an official of his society; and if they pronounced him heterodox, or insubordinate, or otherwise unfit, they might proceed to dismiss him: but of course in no case would they be able to interfere with his citizenship, or any of its rights—they could not order him, for punishment, to be fined, or flogged, or imprisoned. Neither could they, of course, except at their own peril, impose upon any of their members the duty of making overt war against the fundamental laws of society. Subject, however, to the principle that they could not interfere with citizenship, or make war against society, their decisions upon all questions involving the rules of their own community or the enjoyment of its privileges might be final, and might be accepted as such by the civil tribunals; so that the civil tribunals, without re-trying the question of rules or privileges, would (if need were) compel recalcitrant members to submit, on matters belonging to the discipline of their community,

to the decisions formally given by the formal tribunals of the community.

It would, of course, be necessary that religious communities should constitute tribunals and procedure which might be able to be recognised as the accepted tribunals and procedure of the community. Till this were done it would be impossible to say whether the case of Mr. A or Mr. B, appealing for the retention of their position in such or such a religious body, had ever been properly decided upon its merits by the body they claimed to belong to. But the moment it can be said "Mr. A claims or appeals so-and-so: the proper tribunal or synod of his religious society has tried the case according to its own rules, and has pronounced against him"; from that moment it is possible for the civil tribunals to say "We have nothing whatever to do with Mr. A's claims: he belongs to a society which has, and ought to have, its own rules and its own power of interpreting its own rules: if they decide that under their rules he is not one of them, then he is not one of them; if they attempt, indeed, to assault or maltreat him we, of course, are ready to afford all legal protection: but for us, after their decision, to attempt to re-try the question on its merits, whether he is or is not loyal to their doctrine, whether he is or is not to be accepted by them as an orthodox representative and officer, would be much worse than superfluous. It would not only

be useless, but in reference to the proper distinction between the political and religious administrations, it would be disastrously unwise, and full of nothing but peril to the peace and order of the commonwealth."

But there is one point which, according to the existing manner of thought on these subjects, would almost certainly be urged here. It would be said these things might perhaps be conceivable if no questions of position or property were involved. But every such decision necessarily affects, not only the doctrinal position of a community, but the pecuniary position of an individual; and all questions affecting position or property must in the nature of things come before State courts, and therefore the position you speak of is not really imaginable. Now if the ecclesiastical tribunals were affecting to inflict fines by way of penalties, whether of £5 or £5,000, this objection might be valid: but they do not. The most which they do, or would do, is to declare that a certain ecclesiastical position is forfeited; and the pecuniary loss complained of is only a necessary incident (direct or indirect) of the ecclesiastical position. It is true that Mr. A's private estate cannot be touched upon to the extent of a single penny. But Mr. A has no private right whatever to the salary, or other advantages, which are the incidents of his ecclesiastical position. If he has forfeited the position, he has forfeited also its emoluments; and no

right whatever which really belongs to him, whether of citizenship or of property, is affected at all. It is necessary that the line of distinction should be drawn in the strongest way between property to which there is any private right, and property to which the only right, actual or possible, is a mere result of the tenure of a particular responsible post. It is a distinction which, broad as it is, appears to be continually lost sight of. I utterly deny that there is any necessary reason, any reason involved in the proper constitution of a state, why decisions which affect property that is of the nature of a salary must be capable of being referred to civil courts. If the Wesleyans appoint an officer with £1,000 a year, chosen on account of his loyal exposition of Wesleyanism, to perform certain functions of importance to the Wesleyan community; and if he is subsequently dismissed on account of the formal judgment of the Wesleyan tribunals that his teaching is no longer true to their principles, I utterly deny that the fact that the position which he forfeited was a valuable one constitutes the slightest reason why the Wesleyan tribunals should not have been the bodies best able to judge of the weight of the grounds on account of which alone it was proposed to dismiss him, or why the State should be supposed to neglect any one of its own essential functions, or any just claim of citizenship on the part of the person concerned, if it declines to

review the merits of the decision, but lets it stand as a matter of course, as a point decided by those to whom it belonged to decide it, as much if salary is involved as if it is not.

I do not, indeed, deny that there might possibly be issues, collateral to the main one, which might have to come before the civil courts, and might carry damages; as e.g. if a man were avowedly dismissed on the ground of immorality or drunkenness who could prove to the satisfaction of the civil court that the imputation in question was false in fact and slanderously and maliciously made and received against him, it is possible that he might claim from the court—not, indeed, forcible restitution to the ecclesiastical position (which the court would have nothing to do with)—but adequate, and possibly very heavy damages, for the stigma falsely affixed upon his character. But without staying to think further of other extreme or exceptional hypotheses which might make an indirect appeal to civil courts still undeniable, I do claim that, as a general principle, and in all ordinary cases of discipline such as have come in fact before the English courts in recent years, whether from the Established Church or from Dissenting bodies, it is entirely conceivable as a working condition of things, that the civil power should leave to the ecclesiastical the entire determination of its own questions, and the entire exercise of its own discipline; and should accept the formal decisions

of the accredited tribunals of the several bodies as the proper decisions of those bodies, to which all citizens who chose to be members of the bodies must, as a matter of course, submit—their own natural rights of citizenship being always untouched—so long as they desired to maintain their membership. The State would thus be absolved from the somewhat absurd possibility of solemnly pronouncing the "Baptist" orthodoxy of one whom the whole Baptist body had repudiated as unorthodox; or the inadmissibleness in the Church of teaching or practices which the Church herself had formally pronounced to be Catholic.

I decline to despair of the acceptance of these principles. I decline to despair of the prospect of hearing them by and by enunciated as incontrovertible maxims, at once of common law and of common sense. Can we not imagine the sort of severely grave simplicity with which some impartial Law Court in the future might lay down the lines of its accepted theory as to the due relation of secular and ecclesiastical jurisdiction?—lay them down in maxims sweeping and decisive as these? . . . "The decisions of ecclesiastical courts are final, as they are the best judges of what constitutes an offence against the Word of God and the discipline of the Church." "Civil courts have duties and responsibilities devolved upon them, and a well-defined jurisdiction to maintain. The Church has more

solemn duties, more weighty responsibilites, and an authority granted by the infinite Author of all things. We shall not enter in and 'light up her temple from unhallowed fire.'" "We have no right, and therefore will not exercise the power, to dictate ecclesiastical law. We do not aspire to become *de facto* heads of the Church, and, by construction or otherwise, abrogate its laws and canons." "The Church should guard its own fold; enact and construct its own laws; enforce its own discipline; and thus will be maintained the boundary between the temporal and spiritual power." The Church members "joined the Church with a knowledge of its defined powers, and as the civil power cannot interfere in matters of conscience, faith, or discipline, they must submit to rebuke or excommunication, however unjust, by their adopted spiritual rulers." "Freedom of religious profession and worship cannot be maintained, if the civil courts tread upon the domain of the Church, construe its canons and rules, dictate its discipline, and regulate its trials. The larger portion of the Christian world has always recognised the truth of the declaration: 'a Church without discipline must become, if not already, a Church without religion.' It was as much a delusion to confer religious liberty without the right to make and enforce rules and canons, as to create government with no power to punish offenders." "In this controversy is involved a greater question, and of deeper mo-

ment to all Christian men, indeed to all men who believe that Christianity pure and simple is the fairest system of morals, the firmest prop to our government, the chiefest reliance in this life and the life to come. Shall we maintain the boundary between Church and State, and let each revolve in its respective sphere, the one undisturbed by the other? All history warns not to rouse the passion or wake up the fanaticism which may grapple with the State in a deathly struggle for supremacy."

There is, it must be owned, a trumpet-like ring, and a very sweeping inclusiveness about some of these last extracts; but does anyone suppose them to represent a state of things literally inconceivable? Can such a relation between civil and ecclesiastical courts be found only in the misty places of the imagination? Is there anything in the nature of things, anything in the essential constitution of states, to make such an ideal relation *impossible* in the prose of common life?

But even if it be admitted to be in a real sense conceivable, we shall still be told, I imagine, that it is not a relation which the practical instincts of modern nations will ever really be content to accept. We shall be told, with I know not what precise delicacy of phrase,—perhaps that "no state can tolerate the existence of an *imperium in imperio*," perhaps that "every subject retains always an indefeasible right of

appeal to the sovereign power," or under the spell of some other equally celebrated and equally fascinating dictum,—that States, even though, if they would, they *might* do this, yet will never consent to give so much independence to Churches. No inherent necessity but the jealousy of States will prevent it. They desire to keep Churches more entirely under their own authority. They will not part with any power, with any element, or any means of control. They would be afraid to do it. Out of fear, out of jealousy, out of desire to control and restrain, out of anxiety as to the disorders and discontents which might grow out of overmuch independence —they *might* indeed do it, but they never *will*.

Now I might well argue in reply to such an assertion of jealousy, that the conclusion supposed to follow from it was, even upon the hypothesis, mistaken and impolitic in the highest degree. The State will best maintain its own dignity and authority, and the order and contentment of all its citizens, not by retaining in its own hands the maximum of direct authority, but rather by devolving as much as possible, retaining so little only as is indispensable. Every step in the practical independence of Churches is a step, not to say a stride, in the direction of national contentment and security. The nation as such, and from its own point of view, ought earnestly to desire such a consummation. The task of deciding all the doctrines of all the

Churches, the burden of universal papacy, is a burden heavier, and more dangerous, than it can bear.

But to develope arguments such as these is hardly part of my present purpose. I prefer to ask whether, already, the instincts of practical nations have not given the very answer which some of us are inclined to think that they can never give. Does not the testimony of facts already show that the practical immunity of ecclesiastical tribunals from all State revision whatsoever is not conceivable only, but an accepted and most living reality in the States of the modern world? and if this be so, is it even necessary to plead that the contrary practice in England has *not* been conducive to greater smoothness among us of relations between Church and State, greater contentment amongst citizens, or, by consequence, greater national dignity or stability?

I point to two instances only, but they appear to be the two which should naturally be of greatest weight as examples pertinent to the case of our own Church in England. Besides the Church of England itself (whose condition in this respect is the point now in question) there is one other conspicuous instance of a Church "established" under the British Crown and Constitution, that is the "Established Church of Scotland." On the other hand, if we wish to see the bearings of the matter apart from estab-

lishment, by far the most considerable instance of a non-established Anglican Church is the "Protestant Episcopal Church" of America. But whether we look to the great alternative instance of an Anglican Church non-established, or to the great alternative instance of a non-Anglican Church established under the British Empire, in either case, strange to say, we see in full operation that very condition of things which many of our friends at home still seriously regard as hopelessly impracticable at least, if not inconceivable.

As setting forth the accepted doctrine on this subject of the United States of America, there is an elaborate American judgment printed in full in the appendices to the Report of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission. The judgment is that of the Supreme Court of Illinois, and was given in January, 1871. But its significance is even wider than its direct authority; for it is introduced into the English Blue Book not only on the ground that "the very full way in which the relations between the Anglican Church and the State in America are gone into seems to make it desirable that it should be given at length," but also apparently because "that part of the doctrine laid down which is agreed to by the whole court appears to be generally recognised in the United States."

What, then, is the nature of the doctrine there laid down? Possibly it may be a surprise to

some who did not at the moment recognise them, to hear that all those somewhat ringing quotations which were made two or three pages ago are taken *verbatim et literatim* from the text of this formal, and representative, judgment. It may be added that they all (with the possible exception of the second extract) are taken from that part of the judgment which was "agreed to by the whole court."

The general principles, then, upon which American State courts would approach — or decline to approach—such questions are singularly clear. But it will be worth while to describe the case itself a little more exactly. A clergyman was accused of omitting certain acts or words which the rule of the Church required him to make use of in public service, but to which he himself entertained objections on doctrinal grounds. The case was tried before the tribunal provided in the diocese for such a purpose; and the clergyman was condemned and deprived of his position. He thereupon made appeal to the civil courts. The grounds of his appeal which are material were of the following nature: (1) That the diocesan tribunal, purporting to be constituted according to the canons of the Church, was in fact not constituted strictly in accordance with those canons; (2) that the diocesan tribunal did, through prejudice, decide unfairly upon the merits of the case before it; (3) that inasmuch as the clergyman's salary and

position were involved, and as indeed the very right to preach was in itself property, therefore the deprival of these was an infringement of the clergyman's civil rights; and that for this cause, if for no other, it was necessary that the diocesan sentence should be reviewed by the courts. The court decided against the clergyman on all three points. It not only decided against him, but decided against his right to a hearing upon the merits of his arguments. It did so in respect of the second and third of these three pleas unanimously; in respect of the first not unanimously, but by a majority. The decision of the majority in respect of the first plea was of this nature. After alleging the facts that the diocesan officials had intended and attempted to organise a proper court for his trial, and that the clergyman complained of a misconstruction or neglect of the canons on their part, and a consequent want of authority in their tribunal to try him, they say: "The same point was made to that [i.e. the diocesan] court, and its power denied. It was urged with the same earnestness, and enforced with the same arguments, there as here. That court overruled the objection, and decided that it had jurisdiction. Five intelligent clergymen of the Church, presumed to be deeply versed in biblical and canonical lore, were more competent than this court to decide the peculiar questions raised. Why should we review that, and not every other decision which involved the

interpretation of the canons? It is conceded that when jurisdiction attaches, the judgment of the Church court is conclusive as to purely ecclesiastical offences. It should be equally conclusive upon doubtful and technical questions, involving a criticism of the canons, even though they might comprise jurisdictional facts. It requires no more intellect, information, or honesty, to decide what is an ecclesiastical offence than to determine the authority of the court according to the canons. The distinction is without a difference."

To this particular doctrine, however, in the judgment, viz. that the diocesan court was the exclusive judge of its own jurisdiction, two out of seven judges demurred.[1]

There is, then, a clear difference of opinion upon the one question, whether or no a civil court is at liberty, before compelling acceptance by Church members of the decision of a Church

[1] The statement of the two dissentients is as follows: "We concur in the decision of the case at bar announced in the foregoing opinion, and we also concur in the opinion itself, except as to one principle therein. We understand the opinion as implying that in the administration of ecclesiastical discipline, and where there is no other right of property involved than the loss of the clerical office or salary, as an incident to such discipline, a spiritual court is the exclusive judge of its own jurisdiction, under the laws and canons of the religious association to which it belongs, and its decision of that question is binding upon secular courts. This is a principle of so grave a character, that, believing it to be erroneous, we are constrained to express our dissent upon the record.

"We concede that when a spiritual court has once been organised in conformity with the rules of the denomination of which it forms a part, and when it has jurisdiction of the parties and the subject-matter, its subsequent action in the administration of spiritual discipline will not be revised by the secular courts. The simple reason is that the association

tribunal, to entertain or examine for itself the question whether that Church tribunal was regularly constituted according to the rules of the Church under which it professes to act; though even here a majority of five judges to two affirmed the immunity of the Church tribunal from all such examination. But upon every other point raised the decision of the court was unanimous. As to the plea that the clergyman's citizen-rights were infringed by the penal withdrawal of emoluments, or of that authorised status as minister and preacher, which was itself (he urged) of the nature of "property," or as to his claim to a "vested right" in his status or office, they say: "No parish can form a part of the diocese of Illinois unless with the consent of the bishop and the formation of a constitution, as provided in canon 8, by which it 'accedes to, recognises, and adopts the constitution, canons, doctrines, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church.' The

is purely voluntary, and when a person joins it he consents that for all spiritual offences he will be tried by a tribunal organised in conformity with the laws of the society. But he has not consented that he will be tried by one not so organised, and when a clergyman is in danger of being degraded from his office, and losing his salary and means of livelihood by the action of a spiritual court, unlawfully constituted, we are very clearly of opinion he may come to the secular courts for protection. It would be the duty of such courts to examine the question of jurisdiction, without regard to the decision of the spiritual court itself, and if they find such tribunal has been organised in defiance of the laws of the association, and is exercising a merely usurped and arbitrary power, they should furnish such protection as the laws of the land will give. We consider this position clearly sustainable, upon principle and authority."

minister, having been previously ordained, and pledged conformity to the rules and doctrines of the Church, is installed as rector, according to canon 10, by the production of a proper certificate from the bishop. The vestry is required, by canon 12, to obtain the amount stipulated for his support by 'the gathering of offerings in divine service, or by the procurement and collection of subscriptions or of pew-rents.' It would be a mockery of language to say that the agreement for a salary thus made constituted a vested right, a right which could not be suspended. The salary depended upon the continued performance of the duties of rector. The contract must be construed and enforced by reference to the canons which form a part of it. If the minister was suspended or deposed for any ecclesiastical offence, the payment would cease. . . .

"It is also claimed that there is value in the right to pursue any lawful avocation. Of this we entertain no doubt. We have no doubt either of the absolute right of every citizen under our constitution to teach and preach the gospel to whomsoever will listen. But in an organised Church, with written or printed rules, and established doctrines and modes of worship, the right is qualified. The continuance, power, and emoluments of the position depend upon the will of the Church. The right is contingent and restricted, and as a thing of value is very much

lessened. The sentence of the Church judicatory, in a proper case, deprives of the position, and salary and emoluments are gone."

It is, no doubt, obvious to remark that the facts here recounted are in some respects different enough from those with which we are familiar; but across all such differences the leading principle of the judgment on this point will be none the less significant, viz. that emoluments or privileges incidental to the tenure of an ecclesiastical position can neither possess nor confer any title more durable than the position itself to which they belong, nor are they, in any necessary or natural sense, the "property" of the incumbent of the office. If we in England have in any degree artificially made them so, that is a peculiarity of our own, the value of which may usefully be called in question. But perhaps it needs neither Royal Commissions, nor Blue Books, nor Liberationist energies, nor studies of America or any other country, to make thoughtful Churchmen desire that the system of "freehold" tenure of English incumbencies might be greatly modified. There is always a slightly strange ring about the word "freehold" as applied to a pastor's position. And yet it is just this word, and fact, of "freehold" which seems sometimes to be treated as though it were our one foundation-principle. There is a sort of mysterious spell and fascination about it. We are warned not to come near to touch or to

question it. It is clung to, it is idolised, with an almost superstitious reverence. But it is the stronghold of the scandals which discredit and weaken us through the length and breadth of the land.

As to any appeal upon the merits of the case itself, the answer of the court, with its sweeping repudiation of the functions thus attempted to be thrust upon it, has been already sufficiently given in the vigorous language of the quotations upon pp. 274–5. Without repeating these again, we may add to them an extract or two more. First there are the words (which could not conveniently be quoted then) of semi-apology for entertaining or noticing some parts of the argument at all. The court preface the substantial judgment by saying: "Without asserting the power of this court in cases of this character, yet on account of the earnest and elaborate argument of counsel, we will notice the objection that the spiritual court had no authority to adjudicate upon the alleged offence." Then, a little further on, they quote, and accept, the following language of another typical judgment in a somewhat similar case: "The only cognizance which the court will take of the case is to inquire whether there is a want of jurisdiction in the defendant to do the act which is sought to be restrained. I cannot consent to review the exercise of any discretion on his part, or inquire whether his judgment or that of the subordinate ecclesiastical

tribunal can be justified by the truth of the case. I cannot draw to myself the duty of serving their action, or of canvassing its manner or foundation, any further than to inquire whether, according to the law of the association to which both of the parties belong, they had authority to act at all. In other words, I can inquire only whether the defendant has the power to act and not whether he is acting rightly. . . . The refusal of the defendant to issue a commission to take testimony, his refusal to grant a new trial, the alleged misconduct of one of the court, are all matters which relate to the mode of procedure, and not to the right to proceed ; and I repeat that it is the latter only that I can take cognizance of."

There is still one more quotation to be offered from the text of the judgment. "The minister, in a legal point of view, is a voluntary member of the association to which he belongs. The position is not forced upon him, he seeks it. He accepts it with all its burdens and consequences, with all the rules, laws, and canons subsisting or to be made by competent authority, and can, at pleasure and with impunity, abandon it. If they were merciful, and regardful of conscientious examples, he knew it ; if they were arbitrary, illiberal, and attempted to chain the thoughts and consciences, he knew it. They cannot, in any event, endanger his life or liberty, impair any of his personal rights, deprive him of property acquired under the laws, or interfere

with the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, for these are protected by the constitution and laws. While a member of the association, however, and having a full share in all benefits resulting therefrom, he should adhere to its discipline, conform to its doctrines and mode of worship, and obey its laws and canons. If reason and conscience will not permit, the connexion should be severed."

And now we have done with this most striking and suggestive judgment, and with the conception which it so vigorously sets forth as to the proper relations of civil and ecclesiastical discipline. It can hardly be necessary to disclaim the supposition that it is applicable in all points, as it stands, to the existing condition of things in England. But at least for the purpose for which it was adduced it is most pertinent, and most effective. It demonstrates incontestably that it is not ideally only, but most rationally and practically possible, in the most prosaic and modern constitution of things, for the decisions of ecclesiastical tribunals upon questions of ecclesiastical things and persons to be accepted, without review, as conclusive, by the highest State courts, if anyone should be so ill-advised as to attempt to move the State courts to review or restrain them. It shows that the American courts not only see their way to affirming this independence, but that they are ready to affirm it in vehement—I had almost said impassioned—

language, as the one great safeguarding principle against indefinite confusion and peril. "Shall we maintain the boundary between Church and State, and let each revolve in its respective sphere, the one undisturbed by the other? All history warns not to rouse the passion or wake up the fanaticism which may grapple with the State in a deathly struggle for supremacy."

Such is the condition of things with a non-established Church in the midst of a democracy; a condition essentially different, quite as much from that of any non-established as from that of the established communion amongst ourselves. No doubt it cannot but occur to those who read the account of it, and notice the difference of the circumstances implied, to ask themselves how far the relation described is to be connected, in the way of consequence, either with the democratic principle of the Constitution, or with the fact that the Church is there in the simple position of a voluntary body. And there is sometimes a disposition to lay it down that independence and non-establishment stand in a necessary connexion with each other; and that a Church which accepts the privileges of establishment must necessarily purchase them by a greater or less surrender of liberty.

To this opinion we will refer again presently. Meanwhile that this independence of the American Church is not inseparable from either of the two conditions, non-establishment or democracy,

is shown sufficiently plainly by the fact that the Scottish Kirk, an established communion under the British Crown and Constitution, is itself no less independent. We are indeed told, in reference to the Established Church of Scotland, that it would be rash to deny that cases might conceivably arise of such extreme departure from the recognised condition of Church settlement, as might possibly be held by the courts to justify interference: but a proviso of such character as this serves really rather to emphasise than to limit the actual independence for all normal purposes whatever.

The general statement upon the point in the Blue Book appendices runs thus: "No appeal lies to a civil court in matters of discipline or on the ground of excess of punishment. But if under the form of discipline the Church courts were to inflict Church censures (involving civil consequences) on a minister for, e.g., obeying the law of the land, a question would arise similar to some of those questions which arose in 1838–43 in connexion with the Strathbogie ministers, and might be brought before the civil court on the ground of excess of jurisdiction. It is believed that in no case would the civil court entertain an appeal from a judgment of an ecclesiastical court on a question of doctrine, or enter on an examination of the soundness of such a judgment before enforcing its civil consequences.

"Any questions which have arisen on matters

of ritual, such, for example, as the introduction of instrumental music in the services of the Church, or the postures to be observed in public worship, have hitherto been decided exclusively by the Church courts. But it can scarcely be affirmed that cases might not arise of such flagrant departure from the 'form and purity of worship' established by the Act 1707, appended to the Treaty of Union, as might be held to constitute a violation of the provisions of that Act, and consequently to justify, on the failure to obtain redress from the General Assembly, an appeal to the civil court."

The position is further illustrated by the quotation of a judgment of Lord Lee in 1880. A minister who had been condemned by the presbytery, and, after appeal, by the General Assembly, attempted to carry the case to the civil court, on the ground of alleged irregularities in the proceedings. The action, we are told, was at once dismissed as incompetent. The following is an extract from the judgment :—

"All the questions raised by the complainer are questions of Church law and procedure in a case clearly within the province of the Church courts. In such cases it has always been held that the Court of Session cannot interfere upon an allegation that the forms of ecclesiastical procedure have not been observed. As Lord Fullerton said in the case of Campbell, 'If the presbytery have power to proceed independently

of the remit, there is an end of the case. But even if it were assumed that they had not, what is the result? Only that they, an ecclesiastical court, did, in a case clearly within their province, something which, according to the form of ecclesiastical procedure, they were not entitled to do. But on such a ground the Court of Session is clearly not entitled to interfere.' The opinions of the other judges in that case, and in the later cases, appear to the Lord Ordinary quite conclusive against the competency of interfering upon such allegations as are here presented. Thus the Lord President Boyle, in Lockhart's case: 'We have just as little right to interfere with the proceedings of the Church courts in matters of ecclesiastical discipline, as we have to interfere with the proceedings of the Court of Justiciary in a criminal question.' Lord Ivory, as well as Lord Fullerton, explained the distinction between such cases and the Auchterarder and Strathbogie cases.[1] Again, in the case of Paterson, where a presbytery was said to have oppressively and illegally proceeded with a prosecution, disregarding medical certificates of the insanity of the accused, Lord President McNeill

[1] At the same time, a little further on, Lord Lee remarks: "It is impossible to read the opinion of Lord Ivory and the judges who concurred with him in the final stage of the [Strathbogie] case, without seeing that there was ground for difference of opinion as to the competency of interfering even in the exceptional circumstances there presented." Certainly it may be doubted whether this case, as the one prominent exception quoted, does not do more to prove, than to shake, alike the fact and the credit of the usual rule.

laid it down that the Church courts alone could regulate their own order of procedure in regard to the matter. 'If there was anything wrong or irregular in what the presbytery did, I think the proper appeal was not to the court, but to the superior Church tribunal. It is said that in the meantime evidence might have been led in support of the charge. But that would have raised a question of order of procedure in the ecclesiastical court with which we do not interfere.' The opinion of Lord Moncrieff (L.J.C.) in the case of Wight is still more distinct and emphatic. 'If therefore,' he said, 'this were a case in which we were called upon to review the proceedings of an inferior court, I should have thought a strong case had been made out for our interference. But whatever inconsiderate dicta to that effect may have been thrown out, that is not the law of Scotland. The jurisdiction of the Church courts, as recognised judicatories of this realm, rests on a similar statutory foundation to that under which we administer justice within these walls. It is easy to suggest extravagant instances of excess of power, but quite as easy to do so in regard to the one jurisdiction as to the other. Within their spiritual province the Church courts are as supreme as we are within the civil, and as this is a matter relating to the discipline of the Church, and solely within the cognizance of the Church courts, I think we have no power whatever to interfere.'"

To these quotations from the appendices of the Commission's report may be added the following extract from Mr. MacColl's evidence before the Commission: "In delivering judgment in the case of Sturrock *v.* Greig (in 1849), Lord Justice Clerk Hope used these words: 'The first section (of the Confession of Faith) announces a great truth of the Church, liable to misapprehension, doubtless, but a doctrine which is the foundation of the whole authority and government of the Church over its members, that is, that in the matter of discipline, whether as to doctrine or evil practice, or non-observance of Church ordinances, the Church is exercising a government through its Church officers, appointed by the Lord Jesus, distinct from the civil magistrates. Whatever questions have been raised as to the wider effect of this declaration, to which I need not now advert, this is undeniable, that in regard to discipline, the authority of the Church, as a distinct and separate government, is derived from that source. To that declaration, as the foundation of the exercise of Church censure over the members of the Church, I think courts of law must give full effect as much as to any other statutory enactment. It is not our business to consider the truth of that declaration; if it were, I should be prepared to defend it. Neither are we to consider whether it will arm men with alarming power, capable of producing great mischief. The statute has given the remedy in

the courts which it trusted—in the appeals competent to the superior Church courts.' He goes on to say that the Church courts 'have been trusted as a separate government. The declaration of the authority under which they act assumes that it must be separately administered, free from control, from subjection, or subordination to civil tribunals. They are distinct and supreme, and the authority under which they sit excludes any inquiry into their motives by civil courts.'

"Then, in the case of Lockhart *v.* the Presbytery of Deer, the four judges of the First Division of the Court of Session laid down the law in similar terms. The Lord President said, 'We have just as little right to interfere with the proceedings of the Church courts in matters of ecclesiastical discipline as we have to interfere with the proceedings of the Court of Justiciary in a criminal question.'"

Now, in the face of all this unimpeachable evidence, it is surely not too much to assert, that much of the current thought and language in England about the *impossibility* of the ultimate independence of spiritual courts has been shown by the work of the Commissioners, not with any greater or less amount of probability, but to absolute demonstration, to be simply a fallacy. It is surely not too much to claim that the current language on the subject—that confident laying down of sweeping principles in an abstract

form—should be discontinued; and that those who still assert the "impossibility" should understand and admit the very different and qualified sense in which alone their assertion is admissible at all. What the assertion may mean still, and what it can only mean, is (1) that such independence is not compatible with the received tradition and practice of *English* law; and (2) that any change in this tradition and practice, such as to admit of it, is (in the opinion of the particular assertors) utterly improbable. The first of these two propositions is undeniable. The opinion which follows may or may not be true. But it is, in any case, arguable; and I have to submit that it greatly concerns the present generation, alike on the side of the Church and on the side of the State, to examine it far more narrowly, and with far more openness of mind, than has been even possible for those to whom the "impossibility" of independence has appeared a foregone conclusion.

I said just now that it is often asserted that (whatever may be the case with voluntary societies) establishment necessarily involves a surrender, more or less, of ecclesiastical liberty. The assertion has a fair and plausible sound, and is apt to be, therefore, accepted without scrutiny; and yet it is a singularly hollow one. For first, it has been already pointed out that establishment and ecclesiastical independence do actually coincide in the case of the Scottish Kirk. And more than this; the Scottish Kirk is more completely

independent of State control than any merely voluntary association could be. I quote a paragraph from Mr. Spencer Holland's *Summary of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commissioners' Report* (pp. 256–7) :—

"Such being the admittedly independent position of the Church courts in Scotland, its establishment as a fact secures it more liberty of action than if it were an independent corporation.

"'As to forms of procedure, the Established Church of Scotland,' says Mr. Æneas Mackay in his text-book of Scotch law, 'has wider powers (than a Dissenting Church), it having a statutory form of legislation as well as a statutory judiciary, and it can make laws or rules of procedure having statutory authority'; while as to Dissenting Churches, although they equally may delegate governmental duties to representative bodies [here the quotation from Mr. Mackay is resumed], 'a question may, however, be raised as regards their constitution which could not be raised as regards the courts of the Established Church, namely, how far provisions excluding the jurisdiction of the civil courts are legal.'

"Again, where the existence or constitution of the Established Church comes in any way before a civil court it is accepted as a body having forms and procedure recognised by and known to the law, whereas a Dissenting Church would have to prove its terms of association and contract.

"'The former' (says Mr. Mackay) 'possesses a

jurisdiction proper directly derived from the Crown, while the latter has only a prorogated jurisdiction derived from the consent of its members.'

"This, as he says, is the sole distinction between the position of the Established Church or any other religious corporation in the eyes of the law; a distinction, as has been pointed out, to the advantage of the Established Church."

Now without going further into this, or caring to settle how far what is here said agrees, or not, with the dicta of the American judgment, it may be useful, from the point of view of this last extract, to canvass for a moment the meaning of the supposition that an established Church is, or should be, less "free" than a non-established one. I submit that such a view, however plausible at first sight, or however generally held, will not bear examination for a moment. It absolutely depends upon a conception of the nature of establishment, which is alien to every possible reading of historical facts; a conception on which, had it been true, the Church never would have been established. Moreover, it so completely inverts the leading idea of "establishment," as to make it a condition of exceptional disability instead of being one of exceptional privilege. And yet surely if establishment means anything, it means at least this: that the religious association which is "established" is more accepted by the State, more trusted, and endowed

with more powers and facilities than those which are not established. Men allow themselves to speak as though the essence of establishment were that the State gave to the Church money, or something analogous to money; sometimes as though by its supposed gift of money the State purchased, and paid handsomely for, the right of trampling at will over the Church; or even as though, by authenticating, it had actually created a Church, where no Church before was! No doubt the State may give money, or it may not; but in any case this is but an accessory. What is of the essence of establishment is that the State accepts, facilitates, authorises with the stamp of secular as well as spiritual authority, that which the Church is, whether established or no. The Church is what it is. The Church is, before it is established; for otherwise certainly no establishment ever will bring it into being. The State, so far as it establishes, accepts the Church for what it is and authenticates it to the nation. The State has no knowledge of unestablished communions: but the Church which the State establishes is known to the State, and acknowledged, and authorised by it. Its standards, its principles, its constitution, its procedure, the nation adopts and incorporates as a part of the national system. Is it not an extraordinary inversion of any meaning that could ever rightly attach to the conception of establishment, to represent that the Established Church means the

one among Churches that the State distrusts, gags, fetters with disabilities? that all others are free, but that she alone is in servitude? that all others have, or may have, rules, principles, authorities whom the State may, if it will, treat and listen to with respect, but that she whose whole system the nation has in such sense both known and trusted that it has received and adopted it as being, in its view, the truest and best presentment of Divine Truth, that she by virtue of this very act of acceptance and homage should become the one society, professing to be divinely constituted as a Church, which is to be held, for ever and necessarily, incapable of finding out or of determining any of her own principles or practices for herself? Certainly this is something as remote as possible from anything that "establishment" ever was historically conceived or intended to mean. And if this is what statesmen understand by it now, or if it is for this that they or any of them desire to maintain establishment, then the sooner it is plainly avowed that the so-called position of privilege means nothing really but the most degrading of servitudes, the better it will be for us all.

It is probable indeed that there are very few, other than professed enemies, who would acknowledge such a principle. But there are a great many who indirectly imply it, and use it, and build upon it. There are a great many who lay down—and think that they are laying down an

unimpeachable, almost axiomatic, principle—that the Church by the fact of establishment has naturally and necessarily lost its freedom of life and being as a Church; as though, indeed, the grip of the State were so fatal that it could not embrace a Church without strangling it; as though, in a word, the very title "Established Church," instead of representing a great historical reality, were a contradiction in terms!

Undoubtedly the truth ought to lie the other way. The position of an established Church ought to be better, not worse, than that of an unestablished. Whatever amount of recognition or respect is capable of being paid, in America or elsewhere, to a Church which is unestablished, *a fortiori*, much more of the same respectful recognition ought to be paid, as a consequence of course, if the Church were recognised and accepted as the established Church of the nation. It cannot be admitted for a moment that the freedom can reasonably be an incident of the non-establishment. The argument from the one to the other, from the non-established to the established, can only be an *a fortiori* argument. In the case of Scotland it has been indicated already that this is so, at least to a perceptible degree, in fact. It should be an essential element in the fact of establishment. Establishment without this is a caricature of establishment.

It may be worth while to notice incidentally one point about the Scottish procedure which is

sometimes urged as if it constituted an answer to any arguments based on the autonomy of the Established Church of Scotland. We are reminded that the General Assembly (which is the final court) "is composed of representatives elected annually by every presbytery in the Church, and numbers about 440 members, in the proportion of about 260 ministers to 180 elders; the four universities and the royal burghs also send representatives to the Assembly"; and we are asked whether, if we emulate their independence, we are prepared to imitate the constitution of their Assembly by a large infusion of laymen in our governing bodies? As an argument nothing could be more irrelevant than this question. We might quite as well be asked whether, because we admire their position in some points, we are therefore ready to adopt their presbyterianism. The point is that their final Church court (however according to their system it may be constituted) is really final—unrevised by either State or Crown. If the question is meant to imply that the court is any more a civil, or any less an ecclesiastical court, because lay or semi-lay persons are (by the constitution of their Church) seated as members, it is simply a confusion of thought on the part of the questioners. And yet on no other ground is the question strictly relevant. If, however, it is merely meant that we should do well to consider in what way, if we could obtain a similar independence, our

Church courts should be constituted, and how far both in them and in councils it is right to hear the voice of laymen, the answer is simple. Of course we should do well to consider. Everything ought to be considered. And the particular question of the admission of laymen to such positions, and its limits, appears to be a burden laid specially upon the Churchmen of our own generation. But neither their admission nor exclusion, which is purely an internal Church question, affects in the smallest degree the question of the compatibility of establishment and freedom, or the relation which a Church established ought to bear to the nation.

We are drawing towards the close of our present argument; but there are still two matters on which it will be worth while (if it be not too presumptuous) to make some remark, viz., first, as to the nature and grounds of the present method in the English courts; and, secondly, as to the meaning and outcome of the English "Royal Supremacy."

It may not unnaturally be felt that even if everything were conceded which has been either said, or inferred, about the Scottish and American Churches, yet the most that is hereby proved—the most, indeed, that has even claimed to be proved—is that things can possibly be otherwise than they are in England. Moreover, it may be urged that, without any insular boasting of the superiority of our own ways, we are at least

entitled to consider that a system which has grown with our growth in England must have a good practical account to give of itself. It may be urged that the mere fact that the English rule and practice are what they are towards every every religious society constitutes an argument of the gravest weight on behalf of them ; and that there is at least undue self-confidence, if not some flippancy, in freely conceding the fact as to English law courts, and yet ignoring the argumentative weight of the fact. Why should English law courts and lawyers consistently have taken for granted one view of the proper relation between the courts of the realm and the rules of all religious societies, unless it be that that view is in itself inherently reasonable ? Now if it were impossible to return any direct answer to this question, the argument which is implied in it would be more formidable. But the argument fails directly an alternative answer can be given.

Just a word or two to clear the ground first, before suggesting an answer. The conduct of English courts towards the Established Church, on the one hand, and towards the "Free Churches," on the other, must be kept as distinct ideas. The thought which is here meant to be suggested is not so much that the English conception of establishment standing by itself is its own justification, but rather that the treatment by English courts of the "Free Churches" is an argument on behalf of the treatment of the

Established Church; or at least that the correspondence between the conduct of the State towards the one and the other,—the fact that State courts eventually overrule both alike impartially, is an argument to prove that she does nothing wrong or unnecessary towards the Established Church. It is implied that if there were anything oppressive or unjust in the treatment of the State Church, we should see it brought into relief by the contrasted independence of Dissenting Churches; for that it is extravagant to suppose that there can be anything but the strictness of equity in the conduct of the State towards *them*. Is not the subjection of the "Free Churches" an evidence that the subjection of the Established Church is no tyranny? And how, except on good grounds of principle and history, is it possible to account for the undoubted subjection of the "Free" Churches? Here lies, then, the real point of the question; and to this question, in this form, it is perhaps not so difficult to suggest an answer.

For has not the custom of dealing, as law courts deal now, with the rules of religious societies grown up as a half-unconscious but not indirect result of that theory of the Royal Supremacy, which has traditionally been a sort of underlying principle of all dealing in England with the Established Church? No doubt it is a growth, and a modern growth, the necessity of dealing with voluntary Churches at all. When

the necessity began to arise, was it not dealt with by men whose minds were saturated with the old establishment theory of the Royal Supremacy? The practical outcome of that theory has been the reservation, as a matter of tenacious, almost (so to say) of sacred principle, of a revising power to the Crown behind all ecclesiastical judicature. If the minds of lawyers have come to be traditionally imbued with this as a sort of sacred principle of the constitution, it is natural that when first religious questions in nonconforming bodies began to be brought up to be dealt with by them, they should, as a mere result of the training and atmosphere of which their lives and their courts were full, take for granted that the civil power was to go to the bottom for itself of every question, interpreting all documents and pronouncing upon all creeds (as under the shadow of the theory of the Royal Supremacy) without accepting anything as authoritative from the members of the religious societies themselves. In the Established Church itself something analogous to this was done—though, it is true, upon a different theory and under circumstances which, if scrutinised, would be found to be different. In the Established Church the Sovereign claimed the power as (so to say) from within the Church, by virtue of his Church authority, as supreme Church governor. But I submit that it was the shadow of this theory and practice in dealing with religious questions,

which, before men's minds were awake to the nature of the question, caused the law courts instinctively to deal with Nonconformists' disputes in a method of analogous kind; and on a principle which, when analysed, is referrible to the Established Church conception of the Royal Supremacy. They acted conservatively as was natural, and by instinct, at a time when the real nature of the choice before them, or its magnitude could hardly have been recognised by anyone. Of course it is not meant that they consciously applied the theory of the Royal Supremacy to the case of unestablished communions: but that they used ideas which only the case of the establishment really supplied to them,—not being conscious to what they owed them, or from whence they came. Practically, then, their minds were prejudiced—by the force of their traditional atmosphere; and were far less open than e.g. the American law courts to perceive in its true bearings, and decide upon its real merits, the question how best to deal with disputes as to conscience or discipline internal to the life of religious societies. May I compare this unconscious debt of the lawyers to the received principles and atmosphere of the Established Church to the unconscious debt which—as has often been, and will have to be oftener, pointed out—modern Agnosticism lies under to the principles and instincts of Christian morality? It acts by them, thinks by them,—and knows

not whence or why it is moral: rather it falsely attributes its morality to causes incapable of producing it. So the lawyers instinctively and unconsciously borrowed from the methods traditionally in use in respect of the Established Church (which methods themselves were due to the theory of the Royal Supremacy) the principles on which they acted, and still act,—supposing now, erroneously, that the principles have their foundation in some abstract reason,—towards the disputes of religious societies. Were not the American law courts, after all, more prescient and more practically wise?

But if there be any shadow of truth in this suggestion, then it is plain, of course, that the fact that the practice of English law courts is towards Nonconformists what it is will not bear the weight of any argument at all. Being itself a mere shadow of the English tradition towards establishment, that practice can contribute nothing whatever to determine that which, after all, is the main subject under discussion, viz. the question of the necessity or wisdom of the English tradition.

But possibly what has been said upon this matter may lead us to perceive more easily that which appears to be the greatest paradox of all. The implied thought in the above argument was that the independent Churches must be presumed to be treated, as far as it was a possibility, on principles of independence. Therefore, if they

were overruled, such overruling could be no infringement of the utmost independence possible. Our suggestion in reply, which we believe to be perfectly reasonable and true, is that the independent Churches have really been treated on the pattern of the treatment of the State Church. But if Churches really meant to be treated as independent came to be treated after the pattern of the State Church, is it possible that this may be interpreted after all, and almost *per impossibile*, into meaning that the pattern of the treatment of the State Church is itself, in its real proper truth, a pattern not of subjection, but of independence?

Paradoxical as it may sound to some ears, and opposite as its modern results have been—to the State Church first, and afterwards, by consequence from her, to the Free Churches also—this is precisely what appears to be the truth. I submit that the treatment of the Free Churches in English law courts is the more, in a sense, paradoxical, because while it has grown imperceptibly as a shadow of the treatment of the State Church, the historical attitude meanwhile towards the State Church (of which it is a shadow) has itself precisely contradicted the real principles on which it was based. The practice which has grown up, indeed, is that all Church decisions, on what points of doctrine soever, are liable to authoritative revision and overruling at the hands of the lawyers. But the theoretical and consti-

tutional position of the Church is independent. The transition from the one state to the other, great as it seems to be, is yet made not unnaturally nor otherwise than easily, under cover of the really ambiguous term, "Royal Supremacy."

If I may, without extreme presumption, venture to comment upon the phrase at all, it will at least be a modest contention to begin by insisting that the phrase "Royal Supremacy" is one which has undergone a very practical and very considerable modification. That which it really was first meant to signify, or at least that underlying principle which first gave it crucial importance, was (I suppose we may safely venture to say) the competency of the national Church to determine all its ecclesiastical questions for itself, without being bound by the ties of extra-national allegiance towards Rome. But passing by all discussion of this sense, in which it is directly equivalent to an assertion of Anglican independence in respect of those without, and looking only to the mutual relation which was signified by it between the Church and the Crown at home; yet can it be doubted that it meant something wholly different from what it either does or can mean now? No doubt there were practical usurpations and transgressions of its meaning, but, usurpations apart, did it not mean that the Sovereign, being naturally the fountain of all coercive jurisdiction within the realm, and being moreover himself within the Church, was

acknowledged by the Church to be—both within the Church and without it, both according to the ancient traditions of the realm, and with the full consent of the Church herself,—the proper source of all other than strictly spiritual power? It was not he indeed who conferred upon spiritual officers their spiritual office. But it was he who commissioned them to be a State power in England. Quite apart from him, bishops of the Church would indeed have been bishops, and would have been possessed of all rights and powers which belong to the inherent authority of their office: but apart from him they would have had no licence to act in any way as bishops within the laws of this realm, and would have exercised their spiritual influence at their material peril. To him as Sovereign they acknowledged that they owed all their public authorisation, all right to act in and through the ecclesiastical processes of the State, all jurisdiction in the region of material things. There was a sense, no doubt, in which the Crown, even if heathen, must still have had sovereign power over all its subjects. But the acceptance by the Church of the Royal Supremacy was a recognition that to a Christian sovereign, himself in things spiritual a dutiful son of the Church, the Church in all its persons and all its processes owed a directness and alacrity of obedience by which the merely necessary submission and loyalty of subjects were transfigured into something of a reli-

gious character. The Church was willing to receive from him all the civil and national sanction of its functions; and in acknowledgment of, and in reliance upon, his dutiful Churchmanship, to exercise its high office as spiritual council and legislature only by and with his consent. Apart from his consent indeed, its acts, however spiritually regular, could in no case have had any legal validity; and persons, or actions, or tribunals of the Church which were non-legal, could hardly then have been other than illegal also. The loyalty, then, of Churchmen *as Churchmen* became his due, not merely as symbolising the national independence of Rome, but because the Church exercised national rights and powers, and because he was, whilst himself loyally and wholly of the Church and in the Church, the personification of *all* lawful executive power in the realm.

There was in all this not so much a submission to an alien power standing coldly without and above, as a cheerful acknowledgment that, in things not expressly pertaining to God, the Churchman sovereign was indeed sovereign over Churchmen. But then this sovereignty of his was to be exercised in a Churchmanlike fashion; and what fashion this meant was not ambiguous at all. In exercising it he was to be, not the supreme secular person overriding the Church, but rather the Churchman to whom God had entrusted all executive force, and whose privilege

therefore it was to give public effectiveness to the Church. He was supreme as Churchman, acting Churchmanly; just as in the State he was supreme as Englishman, acting within the English constitution and laws. He was no more meant to be supreme as against or above Church principles, or the proper ministers of them, than on the civil side he was meant to be supreme as against or above the laws of the land, or the judges who administered them. In either case the judges, ecclesiastical or temporal, were, when acting in their capacity as judges, independent of him; even whilst in either case they were personally, and for their public position as judges, and for their authority to act in that position, dependent upon him. In either case his supremacy was the sort of personified, yet half-mysterious force lying behind, to give effect to—we may say (if he acted dutifully) to give effective independence to—that system (secular or spiritual) behind which it lay. It still signified really the independence, not the subjection, whether of the civil or the ecclesiastical law and judicature.

I do not contend that there were no exaggerations or perversions of this conception on the part of the sovereign, or that there were no high-handed acts of usurpation which had to be, and were, more or less expressly submitted to on the part of the Church (as well as on the part of the secular Parliament and courts); but that,

exaggeration and usurpation apart, the true conception of the Royal Supremacy, that conception which made the submission of Churchmen to it an honest and a reasonable thing, that conception which was really present to the conscience of Churchmen from the beginning, and did not die away, but outlived all the more dangerous threatenings of usurpation, was of such a nature as this. Now, herein there is no such thing really as the "temporalty" overriding the "spiritualty." The sovereign, who was ideally supreme, was by no means identical, as a conception, with the temporalty. Rather he was the incarnation of a divinely Sovereign Power, lying behind and over all ecclesiastical and all temporal machineries alike. They are side by side, they are co-ordinate, in their distinct domains, the ecclesiastical and the temporal; they neither override the other: they do not meet, save only in that unique sovereign personality, who is conceived of as the ideally majestic fountain of all the legal jurisdiction of them both.

In what it came afterwards to be, the "Royal Supremacy" is almost the exact antithesis to the principle which underlies the American judgment so largely quoted just now: but in its original conception it would not have contradicted it at all. Nay, it is the American method, and not the English one (however lineal the descent of the latter may be), which really illus-

trates and gives exact practical expression to the proper meaning of the old English principle. So directly is this the case that that very American judgment can appeal to the old English principle as the direct and original expression of its own controlling idea, in a way in which no modern Privy Council judgment could have done without a manifest distortion of meaning. "The controlling principle" (I quote once more from the text of the American judgment) "is declared in the 24th statute of Henry VIII: 'causes spiritual must be judged by judges of the spirituality, and causes temporal by temporal judges.'"

This statement of principle is not merely compatible with, but is part of the necessary exposition of, the real purpose and meaning of, the Royal Supremacy.

But the posture of times has changed. The royal position itself is modified. It is impossible that Royal Supremacy can have for practical purposes an unchanged meaning. Usurpations still quite apart, the growth of events itself has been reading new senses into the phrase. The "sovereign" is now, in fact, identified with the total civil administration. The phrase contains less and less of the personality of the personal ruler,—be he Churchman or Mohammedan,—and more and more simply represents the civil or secular power. It is obvious at a glance that the "supremacy of the secular power" will mean something different in

kind from what the "Royal Supremacy," on any admissible hypothesis, could ever have been properly intended, or understood to mean. It now becomes the direct contradiction of that which was once, in its own way, in England, and is now elsewhere, and for justice and for safety should everywhere and always be, the maxim at least of modern States about Churches, viz. that, established or unestablished, they should themselves be the guardians of their own rules, and should execute their own discipline within themselves. The State can certainly nowadays disestablish a Church which it no longer trusts. But to attempt to overrule a Church in its own subject-matter is, at least in modern States, fundamentally impolitic. And this is precisely what we have been brought to in England—not so much with open eyes and deliberate intention, as by the gradual shifting of the import of political terms, by the modification—nay, the reversal—of the meaning of the once all-important phrase, "Royal Supremacy." As pressed upon us nowadays it is really pressed with no other outcome of meaning except that the civil power shall override the spiritual; except (in other words) that the Church shall *not* be independent; except (that is) in direct and fatal contradiction of its own proper meaning and value.

Is this inevitable? The Royal Supremacy was once, it is suggested, an ideal sovereignty, lying behind both ecclesiastical and secular machin-

eries, both the "spiritualty" and the "temporalty," which were themselves, in the constitution, parallel. In both these spheres the phrase and the idea remain. Call it fiction, or call it constitutional principle: it is retained equally in both, but with the most widely diverse signification. In the temporal sphere it now means practically that the "body temporal" is guaranteed in perfect independence. In the ecclesiastical sphere it now means that the "body spiritual" is held in subjection to the "body temporal." Is this contrast of meaning inevitable? Is it impossible that in the spiritual as well as the temporal sphere it should mean (that which would be now, I submit, its proper meaning according to the modifications of the modern conception of sovereignty) a guaranteed independence? If this is really impossible, if it is really true that Royal Supremacy nowadays can have no meaning except such as necessarily contradicts what it ought to mean; is it wise, is it conservative, to continue to be enamoured of the phrase?

If indeed it should be urged that the ideal conception of sovereignty has but been gradually transferred in fact from the personal sovereign to the "body politic"; and that all else that has followed has only followed as a necessary corollary of that transfer; it must be answered that the considerations—half practical, half mystical —which really justified to the conscience of

Churchmen once the recognition of an exceptional Church position in a loyal mediaeval Churchman sovereign, could not possibly be so transferred as to be made applicable to the heterogeneous Parliament of modern days. Such a many-headed despot cannot possibly be supreme as Churchman, or as the Church's half-consecrated champion. Supreme it can be, no doubt; but supreme only as Caesar, the great impersonation of secular authority, the power of this world, external to and in contrast with the Church.

Until the last two or three years, indeed, we might have been told that the Privy Council was no more external to the Church than the Sovereign had been conceived to be; but that the voice it spoke with was indeed a Church voice. They are no adverse court (it would once have been said) overriding the Church, but they are themselves the supreme court of the Church; they are the Church's own last word. So long as this language was capable of being used, it greatly aggravated the Church's wrong. Churchmen could far better have borne the undisguised yoke of coercionist, or even of persecutor; but to be relentlessly overruled by a will and force essentially alien, and yet told in all sweetness that this alien and unintelligent force was itself but the voice of the Church claiming spiritual loyalty, was the bitterest injury and insult of all. The Ecclesiastical Courts Commissioners have

probably saved us from all such language in the future. They have done all that seemed to them practicable to narrow the sphere of the Privy Council Court; and to strip it of all appearance of being a final overriding court of appeal. Every single thing that they have done in this direction has been of real value, and deserves lasting gratitude. And yet, in their tenderness to the venerable but shifting conception of the Royal Supremacy, they have, after all, essentially left the court, and with it the elements of the former complications. Men can see now that the Privy Council Court is no Church court. Men can see now that the Privy Council Court ought to have no power of final overruling, no voice in really ecclesiastical decisions. Yet in the last resort it retains the power; nor is it easy to doubt that practically all the ecclesiastical tribunals, as lower courts subject to its ultimate revision and overruling, would (if ever the recommendations of the Commission were tested in practical working) come by and by to administer and interpret Church principles and rules, and be, in effect, compelled to administer and interpret them, not independently of, but in accordance with, the administering and interpreting of the court of the Privy Council. But if it be so, the essence of the confusion has not yet been removed. Neither will it be, until the Church of England, whether it be disestablished, or still more,—much more,—if it con-

tinue to deserve and command the national trust as established, shall have been in all its ecclesiastical processes and discipline, and in all their rightful consequences, wholly and absolutely emancipated from all secular overruling.

It is possible that the change in English tradition and procedure which I venture to plead for may still seem, on many sides, exaggerated. Possibly some would say that so great a modification of existing conditions necessarily involves —perhaps even that it amounts to—disestablishment. Others, with no less show of reason, might answer, No: but it rather is the prudent reform which most truly conserves the establishment by averting at once the danger and the need of revolution. Upon any such dispute as this I have no concern now to intrude. Only upon whichever hypothesis, and under whichever title, I submit that the modification is in itself a reasonable one; and is necessary for the preservation of health.[1]

[1] [The following are the references to the *Report of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission*:—

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The quotations on pp. | 274–6, | 279–88, | are from | *Report* | II. 638–41 |
| ,, ,, | 290–1 | | ,, | ,, | II. 601 |
| ,, ,, | 291–3 | | ,, | ,, | II. 600 |
| ,, ,, | 294–5 | | ,, | ,, | II. 313 |
| ,, ,, | 321 | | ,, | ,, | I. 35–6 |
| ,, ,, | 322 | | ,, | ,, | I. 73 |
| ,, ,, | 323–4 | | ,, | ,, | II. 367 |
| ,, ,, | 324–5 | | ,, | ,, | II. 317.] |

## APPENDIX

Even Henry VIII himself, whose exaggerated pretensions are undeniable, could write and urge [I quote from Bishop Stubbs' historical appendix to the Commission's Report] "that the title should not be strained so as to imply a denial of the sole and supreme lordship of Christ, or to claim a headship of the mystical body of Christ, or as more than meaning headship of the clergy of England; he insists that the headship is not limited to temporal matters, but that 'all spiritual things, by reason whereof may arise bodily trouble and inquietation, be necessarily included in princes' power': that the spiritual things, the ministration of which is by Christ committed to the clergy, are not so far extended as the modern use of the word spiritual assumes, but that as to persons, property, acts, and deeds, the clergy are under the king as head; that this headship does not imply superiority in things in which emperors and princes obey bishops and priests as doers of the message of Christ and His ambassadors for that purpose; the addition *in temporalibus* would be superfluous, 'as men, being here themselves earthly and temporal, cannot be head and governor to things eternal.' If spiritualities 'refers to spiritual men, that is, priests, clerks, their good acts and deeds worldly, in all this both we and all other princes be at this day chief and heads.' He alleges, as illustrations of the existing headship, the Convocations assembled under royal authority, the fealty of the bishops, licence and assent to the election of abbots, cognisance of certain offences of the clergy; 'so as in all those articles concerning the persons of priests, their laws, their acts, and order of living, forasmuch as they be

all temporal and concerning this present life only, in those we, as we be called, be indeed in this real *caput*, and, because there is no man above us here, be indeed *supremum caput*.'"

Queen Elizabeth's explanation after the abandonment of the *supremum caput*, is, perhaps, more entirely reassuring. "And further, her Majesty forbiddeth all manner her subjects to give ear or credit to such perverse and malicious persons which most sinisterly and maliciously labour to notifie to her loving subjects how by the words of the said oath it may be collected that the kings or queens of this realm, possessors of the crown, may challenge authority and power of ministry of divine service in the Church, wherein her said subjects be much abused by such evil disposed persons; for certainly her Majesty neither doth nor ever will challenge any authority than that was challenged and lately used by the said noble kings of famous memory, King Henry VIII and King Edward VI, *which is and was of ancient time due to the imperial crown of this realm; that is under God to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within these her realms,* dominions, and countries, of what estate, either ecclesiastical or temporal, soever they be, *so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them.* And if any person, that hath conceived any other sense of the form of the said oath, shall accept the same oath with this interpretation, sense, or meaning, her Majesty is well pleased to accept every such in that behalf as her good and obedient subjects, and shall acquit them of all manner of penalties contained in the said Act against such as shall peremptorily or obstinately refuse to take the same oath." With this runs the language of the 37th Article: "Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government, by which titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not to our

princes the ministering either of God's Word or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in holy Scriptures by God Himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers."

The following passage from Dr. Liddon's evidence may be added:—

"I should like to be allowed to refer to the language of Abp. Grindal, soon after he was appointed to the see of Canterbury, when a difference had arisen between him and Queen Elizabeth about the Puritan prophesyings. It shows how little the legislation of Henry's reign had destroyed in the representatives of the Church of England the sense of what was due to the spirituality in matters of Christian doctrine and discipline. I quote from his 'Remains' in the Parker Society's edition, p. 387. 'I beg you, Madam, that you would refer all these ecclesiastical matters which touch religion, or the doctrine and discipline of the Church, unto the bishops and divines of your realm; according to the example of all godly Christian emperors and princes of all ages. For indeed they are things to be judged (as an ancient father writeth) *in ecclesia, seu synodo, non in palatio.* When your Majesty hath questions of the laws of your realm, you do not decide the same in your court, but send them to your judges to be determined. Likewise for doubts in matters of doctrine or discipline of the Church the ordinary way is to refer the decision of the same to the bishops, and other head ministers of the Church.' Then he goes on to address to Elizabeth the language which was used by St. Ambrose to Theodosius and to

Valentinian; and he quotes with approval the statement of the same father, that Constantius fell into Arianism 'because he took upon him *de fide intra palatium judicare.*' Grindal represents what may be termed the extreme point of the Puritan impulse which succeeded the Reformation; Grindal is more of a Puritan than either Parker or Whitgift. This language shows how mistaken it is to suppose that the sensitive feeling about the transfer of purely ecclesiastical duties to the Crown or to laymen began with the High Church Caroline reaction.

"7389. Have you any evidence that Elizabeth conducted her ecclesiastical business in that way, that she withdrew the business from the House of Commons because not fitted for the laity?—Yes, she did.

"7390. Was that her interpretation of it?—That was her interpretation of it. The 37th Article refers to her injunctions. And there is a passage in James the First's 'Apology for the Oath of Allegiance' which shows how he himself understood this oath of supremacy. James had sufficiently high notions of the prerogative, yet he writes as follows: 'I never did nor will presume to create any articles of faith, or to be judge thereof; but to submit my exemplary obedience unto them [the bishops of the Church] in as great humility as the meanest of the land' (p. 269). To the same effect Bishop Andrewes, who was selected by James to defend his supremacy against Bellarmine (*Tortura Torti,* p. 380): 'Docendi munus *vel dubia legis explicandi* Rex non assumit.'"

Mr. MacColl concludes his evidence with a further quotation: "If I might express my opinion in the language of Lord Coke, I should like to be allowed to do so. What he lays down is this: 'As in temporal causes the King by the mouth of his judges in his courts of justice doth judge and determine the same by the temporal laws of England, so in causes eccle-

siastical and spiritual . . . the same are to be determined and decided by the ecclesiastical judges according to the King's ecclesiastical laws of this realm.' And in the fourth of his Institutes he says: 'And certain it is that this kingdom has been best governed, and peace and quiet preserved, when both parties—that is, when the justices of the temporal courts and the ecclesiastical judges—have kept themselves within their proper jurisdiction, without encroaching or usurping one upon another. And where such encroachments or usurpations have been made they have been the seeds of great trouble and inconvenience.'"

Mr. Gladstone, in his letter to the Bishop of London in 1850, wrote: "It is an utter mistake to suppose that the recognition of the royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical established in the Church a despotic power. The monarchy of England had been from early times a free monarchy. The idea of law was altogether paramount in this happy constitution to that of any personal will. . . . Thus everybody knew that there were laws superior to the Sovereign, and liberties which he could not infringe: that he was king in order to be guardian of those laws and liberties, and to direct both the legislative and all other governing powers in the spirit which they breathed, and within the lines which they marked out for him: . . . in making Church law he was to ratify the acts of the Church herself, represented in Convocation, and if there were need of the highest civil sanctions, then to have the aid of Parliament also; and in administering Church law he was to discharge this function through the medium of bishops and divines, canonists and civilians, as her own most fully authorised, best-instructed sons, following in each case the analogy of his ordinary procedure as head of the State.

"It is a well-established principle that the Sovereign cannot administer justice in his own person, unless

authorised to do so, as any officer of state might be, by statute. 'Edward I frequently sat in the Court of King's Bench; and in later times James I is said to have sat there in person, but was informed by his judges that he could not deliver an opinion.'[1] And it is now an undisputed principle that 'though the king should be present in a court of justice, he is not empowered to determine any cause or motion but by the mouth of his judges, to whom he has committed his whole judicial authority.'[2] The doctrine of this passage is, I believe, that of the great legal authorities. Thus while the immense latitude of nominal prerogative was overshadowed, on the one side, by the superiority of the combined legislature, it was, on the other, barred from arbitrary excess by the necessity of operating through responsible instruments. The ideal or legal monarch was invested with these high attributes, while the living one was on almost all sides limited by law, in order that the actual authority under which the work of government is carried on throughout the country in its details might be one and undivided, revered and resistless."

It may perhaps, then, be also remarked that, however fair and constitutional it may sound at the first blush, there is no more logical ground for laying down that there must be an essential right of appeal to the person of the Sovereign in ecclesiastical than in ordinary civil or criminal cases. It is no principle of the constitution that the Sovereign in person, or through his personal counsellors, may always be called upon to re-hear and revise what the Lord Justices of Appeal have pronounced upon. Neither is it necessary for the safeguarding of any constitutional or essential rights of the subject, that the ecclesiastical courts of appeal should not be final.

[1] Blackstone, iii. p. 41, note. [2] Allen on the Prerogative, p. 93.

# CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND LAWS OF MARRIAGE

(A paper read at Warrington on Nov. 7th, 1884.)[1]

FROM city to city the Apostles of Christ went, and in every place that which they did was this: they organised a society. They were establishing a great association which was to be world-wide, and they never obtained a footing anywhere without inaugurating and properly organising a branch of this great society. The society which they everywhere organised had, of course, its officers, its rules, its ceremonies; but the question it mostly concerns us to notice to-night is that it was a society for personal holiness. No matter what nation or country it might be established in, those who became members of the society were bound by the society's rules of personal holiness. Need I say that this great association for personal holiness which the Apostles everywhere so industriously formed and ordered was that which we by Baptism became members of—that which we in the Apostles' Creed declare our belief in—the Holy Catholic Church?

[1] [See page xiii.]

Now it was to be expected, if the society thus divinely founded was to be a society for personal holiness, that it should have its own strict laws on the subject of marriage. And so we very quickly find that it had. If a man transgressed the principles of the Church about marriage, he was turned out of the Church, and to be turned out of the Church meant to be turned out of the society of Christ, which alone possessed either the means or the hope of holiness; it meant to be handed over to Satan for chastisement and bodily ruin—in the hope indeed that out of that ruin and misery the wretched soul might in penitence humbly seek to be reconciled and restored to its place among the brethren again. I am not using the language of any corrupted Christianity, of Jesuits, or of Popes; I am using the language of St. Paul. Let anyone examine for himself the language used by St. Paul to the Corinthians in the fifth chapter of 1 Corinthians and the second chapter of 2 Corinthians, about that Corinthian whom he first solemnly turned out of Christ's Church by excommunication, and afterwards on his penitence restored, and see whether I have at all exaggerated. And what was the offence of this man? He had flagrantly disobeyed the law as to restrictions upon marriage, which was binding on the conscience of members of Christ's Church. We see then very clearly that this great society of the Church had its own rules and its own discipline,

and in particular that it had its own rules about marriage, which if a man disobeyed, he must be turned out without pity as a heathen and an outcast from the Church.

Of course at this time the Church had no shadow of political power; on the contrary, as far as lawyers or judges knew of it at all, they would have had to treat it as an illegal society. But this Church, however humble, or despised, or persecuted, had nevertheless her own rules. A man could disobey them no doubt without doing anything illegal—only he would cease to be a Christian. If he wished to be a loyal Roman subject, he had to obey the laws of the Roman Empire. But if he wished to be a member of Christ's Church, he must obey the Church rules; if he defied the rules of Christ's society he could not be a member of the Church of Christ. There was nothing in this which would be in the least perplexing to the mind of St. Paul and his contemporaries.

But, in process of time, there came a certain great change over the circumstances, no less a change than this: that the Roman Empire itself became Christian, and accepted for itself the fundamental laws of Christ's Church. And it followed before long, as a natural consequence, that the rules of the Church of Christ on the subject of marriage became the basis of the imperial laws. I do not suppose that this made any very great change at the time in respect of

forbidden degrees of relationship; for even the laws of Pagan Rome on this subject had been guided by so sound an instinct that no great contrast of principles was needed. The subject on which they were incredibly lax, and on which the Christian principles made necessarily an enormous change in the imperial laws, was the subject of divorce. Whether, however, the changes which had to be made in the old Pagan code were greater or less, the point which concerns us now is this: that as a consequence of the conversion of Constantine and the Empire, the rules of the Church of Christ became, and in all the Christian nations of Europe continued to be for centuries, without dispute, the basis of all the national laws and customs of marriage.

I will ask you to notice particularly what followed from this. This consequence followed: since the laws of each Christian nation were absolutely based upon the rules of Christ's Church on earth, Christian men and women no longer needed, as in primitive days, to ask themselves two separate questions, viz. first, whether their union was permitted by Christ; and secondly, whether it was legal according to the laws of the land. But since the laws of the land were framed upon the rules of the Church, they were able to take it for granted, without further question, that whatever the law of the land allowed was allowable also in the Church of Christ. I say they were able to take this for granted, and they did so.

In the times of St. Paul, of course, no Christian could have dreamed of considering only the laws of heathen Rome. He must have asked himself not only, Is this marriage legal? but also, Is this marriage permitted in that society of holiness to which I belong, i.e. the Church of Christ upon earth? Whereas for hundreds of years past it has been enough for us and our fathers simply to ask ourselves, Is such and such a marriage "legal"? because we have learnt by immemorial habit to assume that the laws were Christian, and that as Christians we could rely upon them.

So inveterate, indeed, has this habit become, so completely have even Christian people learned to rely upon the law, and to look to that only, that if the law were to-morrow to legalise something which was plainly forbidden to Christ's Church, I am afraid that we should find a great many respectable people, meaning to be good Christians, who would at once begin to think that the thing, because it was legal, ought therefore to be tolerated among Christians. Christian people have learnt to forget, to an extent which is most astonishing and full of peril, that they must look for their rule of right and wrong to Christ, and to that great society of Christ upon earth of which they profess to be members, and only to the laws of the land if, or so far as, they are conformed to the rule of Christ's society. Now I want to insist with all the emphasis I can

that it is absolutely necessary for Christian people to remember that Christ's rules for His Church, and the laws of this or any other particular country, are really two different things. If they coincide, so much the better for us. But even when they speak the same things they are still two voices which happily agree together; they are not the same voice; and they may differ. It is perfectly within the power of the English or any other nation to pass a law which shall flagrantly contradict the plainest commands of Christ. No one would deny in the abstract that an English Parliament or a French Assembly could do this; and yet, incredible as it may seem, such is the power of old habit with us that even if an English Act of Parliament did plainly contradict Christ's rules, there would be found a great many respectable ladies and gentlemen, meaning to be Christians, who would not notice the fact that the law of marriage was being paganised, but would cling still to the old instinct of supposing that because a law allowed a thing, therefore a Christian might do it without forfeiting his membership in Christ.

Do I seem to anyone to be making a violent supposition? Alas! it is not supposition at all: the thing is already plain fact—and notorious fact. Persons who have been divorced in the law courts consider themselves at liberty to marry whom they will; even guilty parties those with whom they have been guilty. Am I not speaking of

things which are notorious?—for they have not been done in a corner. Now I say nothing at present of the question of the second marriage of the innocent party while the guilty one still lives; because, though I might have much to say in argument about that, I know at least that some doubts may be pleaded, and that doctors of the Church have held conflicting opinions on the question. But as to the marriage of the guilty party with his or her paramour, surely if words mean anything, the lips of Christ Himself have pronounced that it is adultery for ever. Yet by the laws of England it is lawful marriage.

Am I dreaming if I say that I fear there are many, even among educated English gentlemen and ladies, even among loyally minded Christian men and women, communicants themselves in the awful Communion of Christ's Church, who are prepared to condone such things as these, and though their taste may be somewhat offended for awhile, yet in time at least, to accept the adultery as marriage, and to frown with a sort of spurious indignation if the officers of Christ's society dare to remember that the Body of Christ committed to them is holy?

But what does all this mean? It means that people are so much accustomed to rely upon the law, that when the law begins, after long centuries of union to part company with the rules which bind the consciences of members of Christ's

Church, there is a most imminent and fearful danger of a great confusion of Christian consciences; and that even in this matter of divorce and marriage after divorce, where, to Christian consciences, there ought to be no doubt at all. I fear it cannot be denied that the deliberate departure of an English law in modern times from Christian principles has produced a great confusion among many Christian consciences. I am not complaining at this moment so much of the direct harm done by that law as of the indirect harm to the general conscience. Nor am I speaking of the more thoughtful minds of the more accurately informed Church members; but it is true, I fear, of a great mass of our people, not specially thoughtful or well informed, yet honestly desiring to be Christian, that by that unchristian law their conscience as to right and wrong will become, and is becoming, perverted and confused; their old instinct of keen discrimination between good and evil is blunted; they are beginning in some cases to accept wrong as right. Yet the Church of Christ and her ministers cannot pare away or make exceptions to the rule of Christian holiness. Now, I say, if this process of confusing of the national conscience proceeds much further, and Church and State differ more and more in their standard of marriage, and men and women are misled (as they will be misled) thereby, then the struggle and agony of soul which will be caused by and by in many

individual cases is fearful even to contemplate. And, alas! it is not future only, this very thing is already beginning.

I have spoken of one point in which already the law of the land and the law of Christ stand in the sharpest conceivable contradiction. The divorced adulteress and her paramour may be legally married, but do you suppose that anything in the world could justify my receiving them in the Church as lawful man and wife? And now, from this point of view, I ask you to think for a few moments of another change in the national marriage law, about which there has been, as you know, a most persistent agitation for many years past. It is proposed to legalise marriage with a wife's sister. But how? What is it exactly that is proposed? It is proposed to pass an Act of Parliament which shall stamp such unions with legality. Now, of course, an Act of Parliament can make them legal, as it has already made marriage with a woman divorced because of adultery legal, and might another time, if it pleased, make a man's marriage with his own mother legal; but it must be borne in mind that though Acts of Parliament can make any divorce or any union legal, they cannot do more than this; they cannot make them permissible to members of the Church of Christ if they are really against the Church's law. Is it, then, a matter on which the society of Christ's Church has no judgment and no rule of its own?

Is it a matter of indifference to the Christian society? Are we prevented from these marriages only by Act of Parliament? If we are prevented only by Act of Parliament, then, and then only, can a new Act of Parliament make them allowable to us.

Now I am perfectly well aware that there are many who advocate the change, both in Parliament and out of it, who really are of opinion that it is, from the point of view of Christ's Church, a fairly open question; and, moreover, I quite believe that there is so little general desire to make a contradiction in the matter between English law and Christian right, that the measure would not command anything like the support it does if it were not for this opinion. But it must be remembered that this is only at most the opinion of individuals, and an opinion, moreover, which hardly bears examination. Is it seriously contended that the Church in any age has regarded these marriages as within the Christian right? Is it in the least capable of being disputed that if the Church should sanction and bless them now, she would be doing a new thing—turning her back upon the whole of her own historical judgment in the matter—and for the first time scattering to the winds the whole of one of the two clear and consistent principles upon which her code of marriage prohibitions has been based from the beginning?

But then, in the private opinion of many in-

dividuals, Scripture would warrant her even in this gigantic change. Now, I am not here to attack the right of private judgment, though I think we have run a little wild upon it. But do let us remember that all this *is* private judgment. Is it so much as suggested in any serious or businesslike way that the Church in this land should remove her prohibitions?

Are there any proposals for the enactment of a new canon? Surely no informal declaration would suffice for the purpose even from the most august ecclesiastical bodies. But who is expected to make even such a declaration? The Bishops? the Convocations? the assemblies of dioceses, whether clerical, or lay and clerical combined? And do you know what these bodies would say if they were invited to make such an innovation in the rule of Christian life? Indirectly, indeed, the question has been already before them, almost every one of them. There is hardly a diocese in England which has not spoken. Do you know what they *have* said? It is really almost as idle to imagine that the Church would sanction such a revolutionary innovation now as to contend that it would not be a revolutionary innovation; that it would not be a tearing to pieces of the whole judgment of the Church in all ages as to what Christian marriage meant and was, if she did sanction it. But why do I use such strong words? Why do I speak of it as a gigantic change and revolutionary innovation?

I think I can justify the phrase by this simple thought. If my wife's sister is to me before God a marriageable person, then it follows that relationship by marriage is no relationship. She is my *sister* by marriage. If relationship by marriage is a reality, I cannot, by God's law, marry her. If I may, under God's law, marry her, this must mean that relationship by marriage is before God no relationship. But if relationships by marriage, relationships (as we call them) of affinity, are nothing, then these two great results follow—first, that the table of marriage prohibitions received in the Universal Church from the beginning is altered, not in one single particular only, but from top to bottom ; for then so far as God's law is concerned I may marry my wife's mother, or niece, or daughter, or granddaughter, or my step-mother, or my son's widow, for they are all to me nothing whatever in the way of relationship : secondly, that man and wife in their marriage were not really altogether one, and that sequels deduced from their real oneness were gratuitous mistakes, for that really they still were two. In that case the Church has been at fault in all ages in her interpretation of the Master's most solemn declaration about the meaning and nature of marriage ; and that declaration itself, so far from really bearing its most obvious meaning, would be understood more easily and more correctly if it were paraphrased thus—"they twain shall be one flesh ; but so that they continue

still to be two separate persons, distinct in all their relationships, and not merged in one; not one, still essentially twain"; and yet "*no more twain*, but one flesh," were *His* words. It is, I think, impossible for anyone to dispute the truth, in history, of these two historical facts—first, that the whole scheme of Christian law and custom about marriage has been built upon the belief that relationships by marriage are absolutely real relationships; and secondly, that this belief in their reality has itself been understood to be based upon, and asserted in, the words of our Lord's great declaration about marriage in the Bible. The Church has seen this meaning in her Lord's declaration, both according to the plainness of its own words, and also as they are further commented upon and elucidated by the whole course of God's revelation of His will in respect of marriage from the beginning of the Bible to the end.

Now, if anyone holds the opposite opinion as to what the Church's judgment *ought* to be according to the Scriptures, I submit that his task must be to persuade the Church (if he can) to modify the judgment which she has held from the beginning. I have not been arguing this question this evening. There may be a time to raise the question for discussion whether the Church's immemorial judgment is right or wrong; to open and discuss the whole Scriptural argument. I may be allowed just to mention that a few months

ago, at a series of meetings with my clerical brethren in the neighbourhood of Chester, I ventured to attempt this very thing, and to draw out from the Scripture the whole outline of argument as I conceived it, which proved that the Church's interpretation was the right and necessary one.[1]

To-night I have barely indicated that argument; I have been concerned rather to call attention to what the facts are; rather to remind those who have allowed their thoughts to become confused, that the Church always had, and must always have, her own laws; rather to insist upon the importance and the reality of the marriage laws which *do* exist for the society on earth of Christ's Church than to prove from Scripture that those laws were absolutely true and right. Yet absolutely true I am convinced that they are; and I am quite certain that you cannot possibly alter them in respect of sisters-in-law without shattering to pieces one of their most fundamental principles, and letting in what will soon prove to be a great tide of unchristian and unnatural licence.

The proposal, then, if carried at all, will be carried, I affirm, only because misconceived. It will be carried by the support of those who, through confusedness of thinking, will think that Parliament has power to make such marriages lawful for Christian people; and who, if the

[1] [See page xiii.]

marriages should be legalised, will actually suppose them to be lawful to Christians. There is a true point of view from which it might really be held to be less mischievous if a law were passed which bade us marry at once our mothers, sisters, and daughters, for at least no Christian conscience would be deceived by that. There is not one who would not know that the use of that law would mean the rejection of Christ. But now, alas! there is in the proposal as made a certain kind of uncertainty and seeming ambiguity. Yes, our long dependence upon the law in Christian countries, followed by the blow which was dealt to Christian consciences by the Divorce Acts, and the mischief of the persistent agitation for the present proposal, have wrought this grievous wrong, that the consciences of our people are so far confused that they no longer think and feel with the strength of a keen and sure instinct between right and wrong as to marriage.

Yes, that ambiguity, that confusedness of clear sight, that misleading uncertainty as to the voices which profess to guide us, it is that which I fear most of all. It is humiliating, indeed, to think of the national wrong which will be committed if, as a nation, we adopt a standard of marriage laws inconsistent with that of Christ's Church; but I grieve most deeply of all to think of that vast tale of yet unwritten agonies of soul and conscience which will wring the hearts by and by of many of our sons and our daughters if, through

the fatal confusedness of the public conscience, they shall be (as they will be) misled and betrayed into condoning or making unions, which they indeed may not intend as sin, but which nevertheless are, and cannot but be for ever, in the sight and conscience of Christ's Holy Church, sinful.

# THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE CHRISTIAN LAW OF MARRIAGE

(A speech delivered in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury on May 9th, 1901.)[1]

[The report of a Committee on marriage with a deceased wife's sister having been presented, its adoption was proposed as a gravamen. In due course Bishop Barry moved the adoption of clause (2), viz.: "That such unions [i.e. with a deceased wife's sister] are, in the belief of the undersigned, contrariant to the principle of marriage revealed in Holy Scripture, a principle recognised in the Church from early times and emphatically reaffirmed by the Church of England."]

I AM sincerely sorry that there is no possibility of hoping that this clause will be affirmed unanimously, but I still venture to hope that it may be affirmed, if not unanimously, at all events by the voice of a great majority. I should like to say a word or two about the principle [viz. of marriage] which has been challenged. The Dean of Chichester has spoken of what the principle exactly is [viz. "the great principle of Christian marriage is announced in our Lord's words, that man and wife become one flesh, and therefore the relations of the husband become the relations of the wife"]. I should just like to ask you to

[1] [See page xiii.]

recollect for a moment further the relation on this subject between the Old Testament and the New.

In the Old Testament there is, as far as I can see, no clear enunciation of a principle which would, as a principle, luminously assert itself in all possible relations. But there is a very considerable amount of what I may call education in detail towards the understanding of a principle. Take the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus, for instance. It is full of particular enactments. But these enactments do not, I apprehend, cover the whole ground. Every possible instance is not enumerated; but there is instance after instance which, if you ask for anything that underlies them, will point towards one great leading principle. That great leading principle is in fact affirmed by our Lord in the Gospels as a principle which had been in fact inherent in the institution of marriage from the Creation forward. The Old Testament is most important for our purpose, not because we are bound either to one or more particular enactments in the Book of Leviticus, as serving for us in place of explicit statute law, but because we desire in the light of the Old Testament to interpret aright the principle which we find in the New. Now, it is perfectly true the principle as announced in the New might, so far as words are concerned, be capable of more interpretations than one. We want to know the true and right interpretation of the principle which comes to us from our Lord, and we find

it by observing the line along which the religious education of the chosen people had been proceeding before. If we suppose for one moment that the principle as given by our Lord in the Gospels does not so affirm the relation of man and wife as to carry with it what we should now call the recognition of a principle of affinity, then I submit that we should have before us this curious phenomenon — a series of educational precepts delivered in the Old Testament as part of a process of the religious education of mankind which led up to nothing at all. They would be left entirely suspended. Whereas the Old Testament at once falls into its absolutely true place in relation to the New, if we recognise it as being the gradual leading towards what in the Christian Church is to become luminous and complete. If we are not able to affirm that principle, which seems to me to be absolutely true ; if we are not able to affirm that the legalisation of marriage with a deceased wife's sister is in our judgment contrariant to the principle of marriage revealed in Holy Scripture, then it really becomes a matter of extremely little practical importance whether we have anything to say about the matter at all. I submit, first of all, that it is eminently desirable that we should now affirm, it not unanimously, yet by the greatest possible majority, that a certain proposal contravenes the principle, the clear and far-reaching principle progressively made manifest in the religious

education of mankind, and culminating in the announcement of our Lord Himself. And I would suggest that the allusion to this principle by reference to the relation betwixt Christ and His Church is something more than merely an illustration. The union betwixt Christ and His Church is rather the fact which the sanctity of the marriage union approximates and expresses, as it were, in another form. So much then as to that point.

In reference to the second clause, I venture to think that this principle has been in fact recognised throughout the course of Christian history. It may be true that there have been from time to time differences of opinion and of usage. But I venture to suggest that all those instances which were referred to by Canon Gore this morning, though they may point to some hesitation as to the precise way in which those Christians were to be treated who had contravened the principle, yet, nevertheless, even in treating them one way or another, more or less leniently, the principle was recognised. I suggest also that, whatever may be said and whatever perplexity may arise from what was done in the Western Church from time to time in the way of dispensations, yet the very fact of these dispensations constitutes a recognition of the essential principle. And I hardly imagine that if we recognise that fact we shall be disposed to let our minds be influenced to any great extent this afternoon by the existence

of somewhat exaggerated claims to a power of giving dispensations.

One word more. As to this last point, that the principle has been emphatically reaffirmed by the Church of England, I cordially agree with every word spoken by Bishop Barry. I feel myself somewhat at a loss to understand what it is which the Archdeacon of Lincoln proposes to put over against the fulness of the title of the Table of Prohibited Degrees. But I should rather quote the words which the Archdeacon has referred to in the Marriage Service itself [viz. "otherwise than God's word doth allow"] as enormously accentuating the solemnity which attaches, in the corporate teaching of the Church of England, to that principle which is expressed not only in the title at the head of the table, but in almost every line of the table from end to end. When I read in the Marriage Service the caution that "so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful," I feel that the Church of England is laying down a principle which is in itself of the most tremendous solemnity, and which finds its own further interpretation in detail in the schedule, as it were, attached in the Table of Prohibited Degrees at the end of the Prayer-book.[1]

[1] [The clause was carried, with only one dissentient.]

# DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

(Two lectures delivered at Pusey House in the autumn of 1897.)

## I. THE CREEDS

I SUPPOSE that every thoughtful man who is, and desires to be, a Christian, must at times have asked himself, in all seriousness of candour, if not with anxiety and misgiving, whether he does, after all, believe the characteristic doctrines of the Christian religion to be the very truth. Thus, the doctrine of the Incarnation, that Jesus, the Son of Mary, the carpenter of Nazareth, was, in the fullest sense of which the words are capable, the actual personal revelation, within human nature and conditions, of the Eternal God—this, as against every higher and more reverential form of Arianism;—it is what the Church has always insisted upon; it is the basis and kernel of the Church's historic creed: but is it, actually and exactly, without overstatement of fancy, the mere truth of fact? Again, the doctrine of the Trinity, the essential threefoldness and mutuality of Divine Personality: it may be said to have grown out of the Christian form of the doctrine of Incarnation; but is it, as stated in the Creed, so essential to truth, that to

lose touch of it, in the understanding of the Spirit, would be to wander from the possibilities of a spiritual insight into truth? Or is it perhaps, after all, a corollary of old-world metaphysics, based just upon the materialising overstatement of the true Incarnation doctrine, and maintained as if it were a fundamental of spiritual thought, by a spiritually unintellectual conservatism? Or again, the Christian doctrine of Atonement—the life of obedience, the Death, the Blood—the reconciliation through Blood: I do not of course attempt now to characterise or explain it: it is difficult; it needs to be explained; it needs to be thought over, with the most absolute sincerity of soul; but is it, after all, more or less fictitious—a strange, old-world, rather hideous way of putting things, which, whatever be their kernel of allegorical or indirect truth, cannot possibly be the cardinal truth of the relation in this world between God and man, in the form or in the sense in which Christian thought has conceived them, and apart from which they would not be that which Christian faith has always meant in believing them?

I have pointed to what seem like very central doctrines. But then, perhaps, does it occur to us that there are others? and are we inclined to distinguish, and perhaps resent what we are disposed more or less to think an unnecessary multiplication of secondary beliefs? Such beliefs,

perhaps, as the virgin-birth, the resurrection of the body, the catholicity and the unity of the Church, or the practical use of the Sacraments; are these, or any of them, accretions unnecessary, at least, if not disputable?

Now, as such questions as these must at some times, as I conceive, have presented themselves, with the utmost possible seriousness, to almost every baptized Christian who was both intelligent and sincere upon the religious side: so, to young men who have thought, in any degree, of the possibility of seeking Holy Orders, they can hardly fail to come home with even exceptional directness of emphasis. Do I really, and not conventionally, accept and believe it all? What are the intellectual and spiritual obligations to which, in reference to these, a clergyman is committed?

Well, if he is a sincere man, he will have done his best to think what the doctrines of the Trinity, and the Incarnation, and the Atonement, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the Church, really mean to himself. We cannot wish him to shirk or cover up anything: we can wish him to be docile and humble-minded as well as sincere in his attempt; to be able to receive things which he cannot fully understand, where it is reasonable that he should receive them and reasonable that he should not understand them; we can see for him how the temper of docility and intellectual lowly-mindedness really contributes to his capacity

of spiritual insight, and is not a mere method or excuse for accepting insincerely: but whatever place we may assign to humility of character as a method of insight, we do wish him to be perfectly true. We would not have him deceive himself any more than us. We do not want him to pretend to accept what he thinks that he does not accept; or blind himself into thinking that he accepts what, if he were more transparently straight and true, he ought to know that he really does not. We do not want him to compromise truth by accepting the doctrines in one sense, when he feels in his heart that their real and proper meaning is another. We do desire that his acceptance of them in the end should honestly mean, that he honestly, and not unreasonably, believes himself to believe what he honestly, and not unreasonably, believes to be the true and proper meaning of the doctrines in the Church of Christ. For him and for ourselves we do desire to take our stand quite unreservedly upon truth. We do not believe in taking liberties with truth; or that the cause of truth can be subserved by anything that is not perfectly sincere.

Well, we have before us the thought of our young man, feeling his feet, clearing the eyes of his soul, upon these central principles of the Christian faith. I am not, of course, going to attempt, here and now, to go through them, exegetically or apologetically. Nothing, it may be, in his life is more vitally important than the

work, intellectual and spiritual, which he goes through, while he is trying to understand and be sure that he does personally believe and mean these things. But this stage, at all events, I must assume. I can say only that for anything like honesty in clerical life, I believe the positive result to be a *sine qua non*. If he cannot believe, himself personally, that Jesus Christ is very God; if he cannot believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died upon the cross for the sins of the world; and that He rose again and ascended into heaven; and that the Spirit of Jesus, who is the absolute revelation, in humanity, of God Himself, is the Breath and Life and Being—the beginning and the consummation—of the Church: whatever else his spiritual history may be (and I do not say that it may not be rich, in its own way, with blessings to himself and to mankind; but whatever else his spiritual experience may be), I at least can have no hesitation whatever in saying that he would not be in place as an authorised officer and interpreter of Christ's Church upon earth. He cannot rightly, without that basis, seek to be ordained.

Assuming, however, that he is, thus far, in essential harmony with the Christian position, there are questions which will confront him again in a somewhat different form. He has no doubt that he is, essentially, a Christian believer. But he is not quite sure whether his agreement is absolute with the forms in which Christian belief

is expressed, and the interpretations and assumptions with which Christian belief has historically been, and is generally, held, within the society of the Church. He is not sure whether he fully agrees with, or can be formally identified with, the "belief of the Church."

Now, this phrase, the "belief of the Church," as I have just used it, covers various things. I should like for the present to distinguish them as three: viz. first, the creeds—the formal and official utterances and declarations of Catholic belief; secondly, the more or less authorised theology—a great body of theological comment upon Church doctrine, some of it possessing a considerable measure of formal authority, at least locally and temporarily, in the form of concordats, articles, catechisms, synodical declarations or judgments, some of it just the writing of private theologians, held for various reasons in high, but varying, respect; and thirdly, the general popular instinct or opinion of the mass of ordinary Christians.

Now, the moment I divide this belief of the Church up into three heads, you will feel that it is capable of being subdivided into many more. Even the first head, "the creeds," is not quite homogeneous. The Apostles' Creed is, in the most absolute sense of all, a *conditio sine qua non*. It is the test with which every candidate for Baptism is challenged. Then and there he is required to profess it; and only on condition of

that profession is he received to Baptism at all. And when he is baptized into Church membership, he is expected to repeat his Christian profession in the form of his baptism—that is, in the form of the Apostles' Creed—weekday and Sunday, day and night, as part of his unchanging worship,—practically, you may say, every time that he enters the House of God for worship at all.

The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed is not similarly used as a test, nor is it part of every morning's and every evening's aspiration. Nevertheless it stands as a monument for ever of the most deliberate affirmation of theological truth ever reached by the Church, as Church, through those sore struggles of the fourth and fifth centuries—so ancient in mere time, but as intellectual problems so vividly modern and living; and it remains as an immemorial and inherent element, if not in the quasi-private worship of every day, yet in that which is most characteristically *Christian* worship, the very heart and soul of what Church faith and Church life mean,—the Communion of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

The Athanasian Creed, of unknown origin and authority primarily moral, though capable enough of being called a creed, and certainly in its own way wholly invaluable, yet belongs to a somewhat different set of conditions. It is an enthusiastic outpouring of Christian adoration—the

jubilant worship of truth. It is not a test formula; its phrases have not been, one by one, hammered out through the Church's agony. It is consecrated indeed by the Church's joyous acceptance of it, through the centuries, as true; and yet, to say the least, it would be impossible to rule that a discussion, say as to the balance of some incidental phrase in it, would be as *prima facie* inconsistent in a Christian as a demur to some article in the formal baptismal creed. I say this not in the least with a view to depreciate in any sense the Athanasian symbol, or any clauses in it, but because there is, after all, some perspective in these things; and because in the interest of truth, which is often delicate and difficult enough to ordinary minds, it is very desirable that perspective and proportions should not be lost sight of.

I say "perspective." You will observe that the practical meaning which this word perspective represents is something like this: viz. that "the creeds" mean essentially the baptismal creed; and the other two as legitimate expansions of that. The three are not, in their own nature, of perfectly parallel authority. I am, of course, not now speaking of the question of their merely *legal* authority in the established Church. But going back behind that, I say that the real answer to any hesitation about the terms of the two later creeds is to show that they do not really travel outside of what is virtually contained

in the baptismal creed. It is obvious, of course, that this is the nature of their historical claim. Neither in the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon, nor in the more informal acceptance of the *Quicunque*, did the Church ever dream of adding one iota to the sum of faith. Expansions of statement had no meaning but to conserve, and no justification if they did not rightly conserve, the simplicity of the one essential creed.

But still, with all their possibilities of distinction, we take them broadly together. A man believes the essential faith of the Church as faith. What is his attitude to the creeds of the Church as creeds? What is his attitude, that is, to particular forms of expression of his faith, regarded as authoritative?

Now, I cannot help feeling that, from the outset, his mental attitude towards creeds, as such, will be profoundly affected by the nature of his conception of a corporate Church. If the corporate character of the Church is to him a truth primary and essential, a necessary result of the nature of man, and of God; then the abstract necessity of a corporate expression of truth will be so obvious that, though of course he is not thereby dispensed from any personal responsibility for truthfulness in his own acceptance of any particular creed, yet at least the presumption in favour of a creed which can fairly be said, as matter of history, to represent the corporate faith of the body will be enormous. The presumption,

*a priori*, will be immense on the side of the creed, in proportion to the completeness of its *de facto* acceptance historically.

On the other hand, if his mental instinct is to think of his faith primarily as a principle working in the recesses of the individual conscience, and rather to resent the corporate organisation with all its necessary conditions of external order and government, as a more or less unfortunate adjunct to the Church's real being—a clumsy human expedient, overlaying, if not caricaturing, the methods of the Spirit; the creeds, as such, will only at their best be part of the imperfectness which he deprecates; and there will be, from the first, some presumption that they will have to be carefully watched, if not struggled with, in the interests of spiritual truth.

For the purpose, you will see that the difference between these two is very great. In the latter case, indeed, he may be able to accept the creeds—glad to find that there is nothing in them after all which is positively wrong, or incapable (at all events) of a fairly reasonable explanation: but they are always just a little irksome to him; he is instinctively on the defensive towards them; he would rather dispense with them; ideally he feels that they ought not to be; and the moment a question arises about any phrase in them which —let us say—is capable of receiving, or has received, a popular interpretation, somewhat exaggerated or materialistic, on the side of un-

truth, or which asserts as true a fact of the truth of which he cannot independently convince himself, his whole natural instinct is to criticise and object to the expression of the creed.

I will ask you to notice by contrast the sort of thing which happens, under similar conditions, to the other man. To him, corporate existence, and organisation, and order, and government, and expression, are in themselves, in the abstract, not antithetical to spiritual life, overlaying or caricaturing it, but are the indispensable expression, in outwardness, of spiritual reality. They are, to the Church, what a man's body is to himself. A human body is the necessary—is the only—method and condition, on earth, of spiritual personality. It is capable, indeed, of expressing spirit very badly; it is capable of belying it; indeed, it is hardly capable of expressing it quite perfectly; it is, in fact, almost always falling short of at least the ideal expression of it. And yet body is *the only* method of spiritual life; even as things are, spirit is the true meaning of bodily life; and bodies are really vehicles and expressions of spirit; whilst the perfect ideal would certainly be, not spirit without body, but body which was the ideally perfect utterance of spirit. He does not, therefore, wish to separate between the Church's belief and its formal utterance; it is by no unfortunate condescension, but essentially and even ideally, that the Church's faith implies to him the Church's creed. And

when he is dealing with those forms of words which, as a matter of history, undoubtedly are the formal and authorised expressions of the faith of the Church as a whole throughout the centuries—that is, the Apostles' Creed, in the directest and completest sense conceivable; the Nicene Creed (so called), with a completeness practically almost indistinguishable from that of the Apostles'; and at least all the positive and actual meaning of the so-called Athanasian Creed: so far from being on the defensive against what may be expected to be more or less misleading, he is in the presence of what may naturally be presumed to be the simplest and most necessary utterance of that which is the very life of the Church's faith.

Now, if such a man is confronted with controversial questions about particular clauses—say, the descent into hell, the resurrection of the body, or the virgin-birth—you will observe the practical effect of his mental premisses. The first impulse of the other man was to think the expression more or less at fault. "Oh, these creeds! Yes, a materialism, an exaggeration, a superstitious overgrowth—sure to be something in these human efforts to express the inexpressible!" But this man, starting as he does—on his own principles, at least, quite reasonably and rightly—with an immense presumption in favour rather of the devotional profession in all ages of the Church's creed, than of any critical capa-

cities of his own or of others, finds that his first instinct is to assume that, though he may well have understood the creed imperfectly, at least what the creed really means must be right.

He is, indeed, perfectly conscious that human language is far less than a perfect instrument. He knows that spiritual realities are larger and subtler than our words. He knows that to different minds, to the same minds in different moods, the same words convey varying capacities of meaning. He is therefore prepared, as on the one hand for all sorts of possibilities of misinterpretation or difficulty, so on the other for such progressive, or at least varying, capacities of spiritual apprehension in individuals or in the Body, that the same simple utterance of fundamental faith, being throughout in essential character the same, may yet have different aspects, and a deepening significance; may not suggest to the imagination of one generation precisely what it suggested to that of another, just because it itself is greater and deeper in itself than any of that interpretative scenery by which, at different times, men have made their approach towards such apprehension of it as matched their capacity. If he is conscious, for instance, that such clauses as the descent into hell, or the resurrection of the body, or even the forgiveness of sins, have been variously interpreted, or that he himself cannot compass and does not fully understand the nature of the truth

which finds an expression in them,—this is to him only a natural outcome of the conditions. But whatever room there may be for discovery of his own ignorance, or of the depths which lie behind the simple statement of the Church's faith; whatever protests may have to be made against materialising misinterpretation; whatever, as it were infinite, advance in the understanding of the simplest words, "I believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost"; what does seem to his mind antecedently impossible—far more impossible than any extent of intellectual or spiritual incapacity on his own part—is that either the Church's fundamental belief, or the forms of her devotional confession of it in all ages, should be absolutely or inherently wrong.

You will observe that this antecedent instinct of reverence towards creeds *as creeds* is a part, and a legitimate part, of that form of thought which conceives of all the things that belong to the Church's external utterance,—creeds, ceremonies, ministries, sacraments, organisation,—as not a condescension, but the divinely appointed and spiritual (nay, the only possible) method of the Church's spirituality, and which, moreover, while it thus conceives of the place of what may be summed up on the whole as "Body," conceives also that this spiritual consecration, as opposed to setting aside, or contempt, of Body, is itself one of the most vital characteristics of the religion and theology of the Incarnation.

You will observe that, while there is this strong *a priori* presumption in favour of creeds in the abstract as creeds, the authority, to him, of any particular creed will vary just in proportion as it can be said, with more or with less approximation to truth, to be the very form with which the heart of the faith of the Church in all ages and places has been identified, and in which the devotional aspiration and worship of the whole historical Church has expressed itself with most undeviating conviction and joy.

You will observe, also, that the sense of a distinction between the reality of the truth which the creeds represent, and the ideas about the truth which those who repeat the creeds may have learnt to attach to its words, becomes itself a greater and a deeper reality of distinction precisely in proportion as the instinct of reverence towards the Church's creeds is real.

If a form of words, as such, has no great value to me, directly I find them misunderstood, or directly I recognise in the truth behind them something which they had not at first suggested to me, my impulse is to modify the words. If there is any special association of reverence or authority attaching to the words, I should naturally go very much further in conserving the words as long as I thought that I conveniently could. But if there is anything like a divine authority attaching to the words, as, for example (to a Christian), in those of the more startling sayings

of the Sermon on the Mount, or the third or sixth of St. John, I unhesitatingly cling to the words and repeat them, through all varieties and developments of interpretation, confident that—whatever else may vary—both the truth behind the words is invariable, and the words have a relation to the truth which at least is deeper than any human power of discrimination or criticism. Now, the man I have described has a somewhat similar relation to the words of those creeds which have been, and so far as they have been, from time immemorial, the consecrated modes of the Church's expression, in worship and council, of her faith. He is prepared to comment on them to any extent. He is prepared to recognise and to protest against all prejudices, however venerable, which may have attached to them, and tried with more or less success, but as he thinks in his conscience not rightly, to identify themselves with them. He is prepared to find unknown vistas of possibility of *bona fide* interpretations within them. Do they not, after all, in their brevity, represent a truth the explanation of which is infinite? But it is a conviction in him which springs from something far deeper than any form of prejudice, or cowardice, or unconsciously interested worldliness, when he feels that to part with the profession of what is really the Church's creed; to have to say of its words, not only that generations of Christians may have in some points attached to them false

or inadequate meanings, but that that which they truly and properly do both say and mean is itself inadequate or false, so that they must either be denied or by conscious acts and force interpreted to mean the very contradictory to what is admitted all the time to be their natural and proper meaning; that this would be to him a real personal separation from the consecrated life — because from the consecrated conviction and faith — of the Church, which is the Body of the Spirit of Christ.

Now, I must frankly say that the attitude towards the creeds which I have tried to describe is the attitude which comes to myself most naturally, and which I myself believe to be both reasonable and right. My object at this moment has been not so much to press it as to justify it. It seems to me perfectly to cohere, and I have been anxious if possible to explain its coherence, with the simplest requirements of reason in spiritual things.

Before leaving off, however, I should like, avowedly indeed upon the basis of such a mental position, to glance at one or two other positions not identical with this.

Take the case, for instance, of the man who, as I said just now, starts with no antecedent reverence for the Church as Church in any particular—its government, its ordinances, or its creeds; admitting that something of the kind may be practically necessary, and submitting

with more or less docility to what he finds (himself not *otherwise than* a Churchman and communicant), but on the defensive always, as towards a merely human system, whereby men have cloaked, and which they are always mistaking for, the working of God's Spirit in the world. Yet in his allegiance to the Incarnate Christ he is real. He believes Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, and to have lived and died for the souls of men; and therefore, also, whatever may be the form of his theory as to their relation to the things which men call "natural," he believes that the things which men call "supernatural" are real and true.

Now, first, I must say of him that I cannot for my own part admit that this is at all an ideally true position. I do not think that that is the truth or completeness of the Christian attitude towards the Christian faith.

And, secondly, I must say that the things which he accepts do seem to me implicitly to carry the things as to which he doubts. The principle of the Incarnation, with its consecration of the material and the bodily; and a belief in the Spirit of the Incarnate as that, behind the material and the bodily, which, while working *through* the material and the bodily, gives to the material and the bodily all its ideal—that is, its real—meaning; ought, as I conceive, to carry him a great deal further into what I may perhaps intelligibly call the loyalty of Churchmanship,

than he is the least prepared to realise. So far, therefore, as I could be conceived to have any power of influence with such a man, it would certainly be exercised in the direction of trying—not to combat any position really held by him, or to inculcate any principles which were really strange to him, but rather of trying to convince him, if possible, that he did already implicitly hold the things from which he seemed to himself to shrink.

And, thirdly, if (as is only too probable) such discussions left him more than ever unconvinced and suspicious—shall I say, of the whole human side of the *Ecclesia Episcoporum*, with its councils and its creeds—what then? Perhaps I can answer better by drawing a distinction. Think of him first then, if you please, in the character of a Christian layman. And I think I may venture to say that the characteristic of his position which strikes me most is *his reality*. Here is a man of whom I feel, more than of most, that the haunting fear of conventionalism and unreality is laid at rest. He is neither on the one side a conventional Churchman, nor on the other a conventional disbeliever or critic. He does not indeed illustrate the fullest completeness of the joy of communicant life in the Church of Christ. Yet, putting aside just the few who have entered most into the radiant possibilities of Churchmanship, I could but be thankful if the bulk of those who may appear to be most ortho-

dox conventionally were as vitally Christian as he. In saying this, no doubt I am a little unfairly slurring over the case of the conventionally orthodox, but it is in order to bring out what is positively true in the way of sympathy with the case supposed. He at least should be, as I conceive, one of those to whom the heart of the Master, and of the Master's true servants, would go out.

But think of him again in the character of a candidate for Holy Orders. Now here, as a conscientious man, he is apt to put the points of his doubt somewhat prominently into the foreground. What shall we say? This first: that from what we said of him as layman, it follows that, if he has the heart and the will to desire it, we should heartily *desire* to see him ordained. It is to be remembered in many contexts, and it is certainly to be remembered in this, that it is a fundamental fact, and a principle because a fact, in the Church of Christ, that there is no ministry on earth to mankind but the ministry of man. That which teaches man, ministers to man, represents God to man, is necessarily part of the lump of man. Priesthood is a movement —a Divine movement of course—but a movement of, and within, humanity; not an intermediary between humanity and God. It is part of the distortion of the priestly idea so to separate priesthood and laity, as to forget that they rise and fall and struggle and grow and learn together.

Antecedently, therefore, we should welcome into ministry whatever is genuine and real in Christward effort and growth within, and for the sake of, the Body. Yes, but there are necessarily conditions. There are external disciplines, and ordinances, and obediences, and formularies, and creeds. Of course he cannot defy these. But it is exactly this question, in respect of creeds, which is the question before us just now. Is his position, as it stands, one of sufficiently real acceptance of the creeds? There is no question, you will remember, about his thinking the creeds fundamentally false. That which is their central core of meaning (and which, as I should myself endeavour to explain, carries and covers every word contained in them) he believes to be fundamentally true. But he does *not* think that its truth covers quite the whole of the creeds, and cannot forget that he doubts whether some of their phrases are true. I have already said that there is strong presumption for wishing to admit him to Ordination, if he is admissible. Is he, then, admissible or no?

Now I can only speak for myself. But so speaking, I would venture to offer a certain distinction. *If* his position is *either*, in case of phrases which can be understood with different degrees or depths of meaning, that he doubts whether the current historical meaning is adequate, and thinks that their true exposition is one which goes beyond the popular one; or, in

case of statements, the meaning of which is *not* capable of any ambiguity, that he is unable to convince himself independently that they are a part of certain or necessary truth, and is not yet ready to accept them as fully guaranteed by the fact of their historic place in the creed ; if, in other words, he *either* honestly accepts the words, though perhaps not quite the current view of them, or even doubts—in the sense of not being able to feel personally certain—that the truth of the words is quite a certain and necessary truth ; he need not be necessarily out of place even as an office-bearer and teacher in the Church. To exclude him in the first case would probably be to exclude not a little of the highest theological capacity. And in some instances, at least, it is possible that to exclude him in the second case might be to undervalue the educational effect, on a spirit which you have reason to believe to be at once distinctively Christian and scrupulously truthful, of a growing experience, both intellectual and practical, of what life and loyalty in the Church's ministry mean.

On the other hand, if his doubt goes further than this, and means that there are clauses in the creeds which he honestly believes to be *un*true—in the only interpretation which he feels that he can honestly call their proper one ; so that he either openly leaves them out from that faith of the Church which he is prepared to accept, or includes them only by forcing on them an inter-

pretation, which is not only not the current one, but is, to his own mind and conscience, not the proper or natural one, but as far as that form of words is concerned, a consciously non-natural gloss; I must certainly maintain that he would be quite out of place as an authorised exponent of that faith, whose age-long expression he can only accept by putting a conscious force upon his own instincts of truth.

I should be prepared to tolerate elements of anxiety and of doubt; I should be prepared to tolerate an honest conviction that the truth underlying the words which the Church has learnt from Scripture really means in Scripture and in truth something other, or more, than Churchmen have generally realised; I should be prepared—nay, I should be forward—to disclaim the idea that any popular interpretation, as such, even with a prescription of centuries behind it, is the final measure or test of the meaning of those utterances of truth which the Church (receiving them from her written gospel as words of authority) has cherished again and again with most imperfect apprehension; but I should not be prepared to tolerate an acceptance of creeds which, while really thinking that they really mean and say what is false, is yet ready so far to blunt the edge of truthfulness as to use false words as a vehicle of truth, putting upon them by deliberate forcefulness a meaning which it does *not* believe to be theirs.

It will be felt, perhaps, on some sides that I have after all evaded the point of difficulty; for that I have given no way of testing the difference between a perfectly honest acceptance of a doctrine in an unusual sense—for example, a belief in the resurrection of the body or in the Catholic Church, which, while it was the real very truth of the doctrine to the man himself, might possibly seem *to others* like a gloss; or an acceptance which depended, to the mind of the acceptor, upon a conscious and deliberate acquiescence in glossing. I do not care, for the present purpose, to offer any such test. I am discussing abstract principles, not trying concrete cases. But the difference in the abstract is to me the difference on which everything turns. I could go very far in admitting what, however unusual, was yet perfectly honest exegesis of a formula honestly accepted as formula. But I could go no way at all in the direction of admitting glossing as a principle.

You will observe that we have now in reality got a rather long way from the case of the man I was considering a few minutes ago. He indeed had little reverence for Churches and creeds as such. He had misgivings as to his agreement with some points of formulated doctrine. But his essential character was exceptional candour and most scrupulous veracity. It would have been to him a pain to be told that he was contriving to keep terms with the faith only by refinements

of verbal ingenuity—reading indirect and novel meanings into words which both historically and properly meant something different. To defend glossing as glossing, and make a positive principle of accepting words—the fundamental words of the Church's faith—in a sense which is admitted to be non-naturally imported into them, is to have passed into a very different attitude indeed.

For a catechumen so to treat his baptismal creed, and to make solemn answer to the challenge which it makes to him at his baptism, by saying in effect, "I am willing to say these words, because I think I believe in that which lies at the heart of the Church's faith ; but this form of words does, at least in part, misrepresent the Church's faith as it ought to be ; and in some phrases, even while I repeat them, I shall mean the very opposite to that which the Church has universally and invariably cherished as her faith, and which these words were *always* meant to, and do quite unquestionably, *say*" ;—I cannot admit that his position could be reconciled with the commonest principles of truth.

Nor do I see that his position is in any way improved if, in the same attitude to the Church's fundamental creed, what he now is seeking at her hands is not merely admission to membership, but the office of her accredited interpreter and minister. To put this, indeed, into a positive form, as a theory formulated and avowed ; to say that in subscribing to creeds we none of us mean

what we say, and that if we mean rather less of what we say than others, we all are still alike in respect of compromising merely literal truth; or even that those who in former times, or now, have dared to go the furthest, in saying, from what they meant, have really served truth most, by most emancipating mind from fetters with which it ought never to have been bound;—this, in relation to the creed of the Church, would appear, I own, to me a position so wholly indefensible as to be ultimately subversive both of truth and character.

I have endeavoured this afternoon to keep my thoughts fixed upon the Church's creeds, as being that which I believe, and have tried to represent, them to be to the Church's life. But it would probably be desirable, even for a completeness of thought on this subject, to go further, and make some comparison between the Churchman's obligation to the Church's creed, and his attitude to those other utterances, of more kinds, it may be, than one, which he also is called upon to accept.

## II. THE ARTICLES

I made some attempt last week to suggest a working view as to the obligation of a Church teacher or minister to the creeds of the Church. Speaking broadly, I must reckon this obligation as very high and complete. It seems to me to run back into the question of the very nature and

being of the Church. If the Church's character as an organised body is an unfortunate necessity to which the Church is compelled, by reason of her failures, to submit, then I can understand that everything which belongs to the Church's outwardness, and therefore the outward and formal expression of her faith, will be more or less an object of suspicion. I think this is a mistaken temper of thought, philosophically (if I may say so) and theologically at least as much as ecclesiastically; and specifically I think it a misapprehension of the consequences which outflow from the characteristic doctrine of the Incarnation, which sees in what is outward and bodily the consecrated method, not the imprisonment or mere degradation, of Spirit. Of the doctrine of Incarnation in that aspect, Church unity and Creed unity are, as it seems to me, a necessary corollary.

But the moment I think of creed unity as on this level, the moment I regard it as part of the necessary corollary of the Incarnation and the Church, I am conscious, of course, that what I mean by creed unity can only be that which *is* a necessary corollary from the Incarnation. I do not mean that all intellectual ideas or definitions throughout the Church should be of one mould; I do mean that that fundamental conviction which constitutes, in one aspect, the Church's very life should have a single expression in which all should unite. I am speaking, it is plain, of the

simplest necessary utterance of the essential faith. Unity of fundamental profession—that is, unity of creed—seems to me in this sense as inseparable from the conception of Church unity as Church unity is from the conception of the unity of man or of God.

Such a creed must necessarily be simple—not theologically argumentative: a statement of the central truths of the revelation of the Incarnation, and of such essential facts and principles as are necessary to make belief in the central revelation articulate. If it may be said that the simplest form of such a creed would be the one word thrice repeated, "Holy, Holy, Holy," it must be admitted that a form so short as this would be too short to convey itself *at all*, without some expansion, to the apprehension of those who used it. "I believe in God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," is the simplest of expansions. But, for practical purposes, even this leaves the conception of Incarnation and Atonement too wholly undetermined. God, the Father, Almighty; Jesus Christ, born, crucified, buried, descended, risen, ascended, in glory; the Holy Ghost, the life of the Church of Christ, and its possibility of forgiveness, to eternity:—I have ventured to paraphrase thus, in order to exhibit the sort of character of that outward profession, or creed, which can be conceived to occupy the high place I am claiming ideally for a creed, as a necessary method of the Church's life.

If it be urged that even the Apostles' Creed contains phrases besides these, I hold that it should be our effort to show that it contains nothing which is really separable from these; nothing certainly which the Church in any part, or in any age, has ever admitted to be separable from these.

But, in speaking thus, I have not intended to urge that one who really doubts about other propositions of the creed should attempt to stifle his doubts, in simple submission to the mind of the Church. On the contrary, I should almost certainly urge him to go right into them, right through with them, that he might come right out of them. Only, in this inquiry, I conceive that, if he understands the rest of his creed, he will not be without a very strong presupposition of reverence towards what the Church has, in all ages, really held; a presupposition which will not, presumably, carry him all the way, but which ought to be very real among the data. Even, indeed, a simple submission to the Church's judgment, as such, is a possibility which, in a matter such as this, I cannot admit to be irrational, or always unwise. Still, it is not what I myself should be likely to urge, or even to imagine to be generally possible, amongst minds trained to anything like independence of judgment. But, on the other hand, to attempt to marshal the evidence for or against (say) the truth of the virgin-birth, as if it could be a new

question to be determined by itself in this age, apart from either its historical connexion with the immemorial faith, or its theological connexion with the primary and basal conceptions of Christianity, does seem to me beyond all words superficial and unreal.

If, however, there is anyone after all who, with an inadequate idea, as I should conceive, of the nature of the Church, cannot bring himself beyond all doubt as to what seem to him still to be added phrases, I should certainly desire to act towards him with every conceivable tenderness in his honest uncertainty; but, should his doubts lead him on to a positive decision that these things ought to be removed from the creed as wrong, or (worse still) accepted in the creed in a sense which is recognised as not being their own; I must think that he is really, so far, separating himself from the faith of the Church.

But does this sort of thought really apply to anything of wider range than creeds? Or rather, since "creeds" can only be in the plural, on the ground that they are not many, but one, will it really apply to anything outside that one unchanging creed which is the fundamental interpretation and utterance of the meaning of the Church's life? How far will it apply, for instance, in our own case, to the Thirty-nine Articles?

Now, if anyone has really followed the line of thought which I have tried to put before you, he,

at least, will not be surprised, but prepared, for what would seem to others a sudden and enormous change of attitude. I have been trying to argue that a fundamental creed-utterance, so far from being an unfortunate result of spiritual failure, is itself part of the internal necessity, a true element in the primary ideal, of a spiritual Church; at least in a world where all expression of spirit is through body, and in a religion which emphatically recognises body as the only, and the true, method of spirit.

But it must surely be obvious, at a glance, to anyone, however highly he may think of the theological exposition given in the Thirty-nine Articles, that language like this would be, in relation to them, even grotesquely inapplicable. Whether they are in every syllable very excellently good, or no, it is plain on the face of it, that the fact of their existence *at all* in that form, as Thirty-nine Articles, is exactly what I have been protesting that the baptismal creed is not; that is to say, that it is a consequence and an aspect—not of the Church's existence, but of the Church's failure.

I think that we are right in putting this, as principle, quite unreservedly. The Church, without a creed, would not, in human life on earth, *however ideally perfect*, have been a Church at all. But if the Church on earth had been ideally perfect, or anything even remotely like it, there would never have been any Thirty-nine Articles.

The one is a necessary feature of spiritual reality. The other is an unfortunate consequence of spiritual failure.

Nothing, as it seems to me, can result but confusion from any attempt to understand our relation to these two, which fails to take account of the *enormous* contrast between the one and the other, when you come to their ultimate rationale, on abstract principle. Try to exhibit our real relation to the articles in terms of our relation to the creeds, and your statement will obviously be, in relation to any reasonable view of theological history, overstrained and untenable. Try to exhibit our real relation to creeds, in terms of our relation to the articles, and you will have been compelled to give sanction to principles of independence and critical detachedness which will probably in the end be incompatible with the existence of a Church at all. This seems to me clear enough as principle. And, moreover, I believe that much of the confusedness and mistake which in fact often confronts us in relation to these subjects, is the result of a failure to discriminate between two things which are in themselves not merely distinguishable, but radically different.

It is not improbable that the distinction which I am now insisting upon may be disputed, upon the ground that in either case our obligation, to creeds or to articles, is, if stripped to its nakedest form, a legal obligation, and that the legal obliga-

tion is, in either case, one and the same. I cannot possibly admit a contention such as this.

The real obligation of a Christian to the creeds of the Church was not created, and cannot be measured, by any Acts of Uniformity. The real obligation rests upon the very nature of the Church. The acceptance of her baptismal profession creates the obligation, which is again acknowledged and reinforced by every act of participation in her services—a participation in itself indispensable to reality of membership. It is to be added that the baptismal creed is itself that by which our faith is to be examined, according to the Church's Visitation Service, when we lie in our last sickness, face to face with death. Such an obligation as this is assumed *before* it is enforced by any law; and assumed by any law which purports to enforce it. It is true, no doubt, that when a law subsequently essays to enforce the natural obligation of a Churchman to the Church's creeds, it creates a new legal obligation; and that the newly created legal obligation is measured only by the terms of the law. It is true, no doubt, that in a national Church which has long been established, popular feeling is apt, by long custom, to measure all Church obligation by its legal obligations; and that if a law were passed relaxing obligations to creeds, there would be many who would assume at once that Churchmen were so much ecclesiastically the freer—whilst even the wisest would be sorely perplexed

to draw clear definitions or determine exactly the line between what had been effected by the change of law and what not. But in point of fact, the power which the law has, as mere law, to relax obligation to creeds in some details, is, ultimately, only the same power which it undoubtedly has to proscribe creeds altogether, or to enact the use of blasphemy in their place. That is, it is ultimately its power to oppress and to persecute. The obligation of a Churchman to the Church's creeds may be either enforced by law or denounced by law; but it really is antecedent to and independent of law. If the law should denounce it, it would be nevertheless real in a sphere that is higher (or at least, other) than law. And while the law enforces it, we certainly cannot admit that the law so enfeebles it in the act of enforcing it as to take all its own meaning utterly out of it. The law adds a new kind of sanction, but does not take anything away from the natural Christian sanction, which it had before. If it is true that the Church of England could only touch an unbelieving clergyman by process of law, and could therefore only try him by his legal obligation—the other being legally treated as if it were not—that is only one of the accidental consequences, more or less unfortunate, which are apt to follow in the train of a legal establishment. We see their failure; but they are admittedly difficult to remedy, and we tolerate them, at least till they are intolerable. Still, how-

ever much it may remain a truism that only the legal obligation can be legally enforced, and however much it may be an accident of our historical position, fortunate or unfortunate, that nothing can be corporately enforced save by legal process, we must still regard it as a manifest absurdity to contend that a Churchman's obligation to his creeds begins and ends with that legal obligation to which the law courts will statutably and penally bind him. This would, in fact, only be true if the Church had really no other existence as Church, except just so much as had been conferred upon it by statute law. In that case it is clear that for at least two centuries after the death of St. John there existed no Church at all, or at least no Church with boundaries that could be defined, or discipline that could be enforced by any real sanction.

Now, with articles the case is exactly altered. These are no part of the inherent life of the Church. It is obvious, upon the face of it, that they are *local*. Whatever complaint we may be inclined to make against the Churches of Rome or of the East, no one would dream of an absurdity so manifest as denouncing them because they do not accept the Thirty-nine Articles. And it is hard for us to regard as anything but amusing, if not grotesque, the proposal made the other day in a Church Council in Japan to embody the Thirty-nine Articles as an integral part of the Prayer Book of the Japanese Church.

Again, it is obvious upon the face of it that they are *temporary*. As they stand they are inconceivable as a part of the vital constitution of the Church of the first ten centuries. Moreover, it is obvious that, however necessary they may be thought to have been in the sixteenth century—however necessary they may be thought to be now, or to be likely to be for generations or centuries yet to come—at all events no Churchman could conceivably be held to be in any way disloyal to his position in the Church of Christ, if he looked forward to a time when the Thirty-nine Articles as they stand, being less and less applicable to the circumstances and the thought of the Church, would at last be outgrown altogether. If the final supersession of the articles might, on one side, be a quite possible result of increasing laxity and worldliness; it is on the other side a possibility, no less conceivable, that it might be the final result of a mighty deepening of spiritual insight and unworldly life. In any case it seems to me necessary to truth that we should conceive of them as being essentially local and temporary expedients. They are somewhat elaborate definitions, full of controversial colouring in reference to the particular circumstances of an age of sharply accentuated division and controversy. And so, without suggesting for a moment that the time has come when the articles could be dispensed with—it has neither come, nor is yet, I fear, at all in sight—I must never-

theless, for one, rejoice sincerely at everything which calls attention to the thought how separable they are from the essence of the Church's life; everything which recognises that the stringency of identification with the letter of their theological expression must needs become, as generations roll on, less and less absolute; everything, in short, which puts them into their place, as the expression of a theological standpoint in reference to the extravagances of contemporary controversy, of very high local and temporary value—a value which is far from being yet exhausted for us—but which it would nevertheless be the merest confusion to rank along with the essential creed, which is an inseparable aspect of the life, of the Church.

I am not suggesting, you will observe, that we are not meanwhile bound to the articles. But if I am bound to them, my obligation is really, in this case, of the legal kind. It is simply and only what the law has made it, and maintains it, so long as the law is unrepealed. I have nothing but this legal obligation to take account of. In saying this, I do not mean to suggest that it is matter of secular law distinctively, as opposed to ecclesiastical; the obligation has an ecclesiastical character as well as a secular; but in either aspect it is what a positive enactment has made it—a local enactment, which might at any time locally be repealed. Whilst, then, I acknowledge my obligation both to creeds and to articles, I must

say that my attitude towards creeds and articles respectively is an immeasurably different one.

I cannot but accept, as towards articles (still speaking in the abstract), what I described last time as the false attitude towards creeds. The articles *are* a more or less regrettable adjunct to the Church's real being as Church; they *are* incidental to that imperfection and dividedness which we cannot but deprecate. Antecedently, therefore, it is neither unnatural nor unreasonable if we start with a certain sense of nervousness towards them, as towards statements elaborated under very human circumstances of controversy at a particular epoch, which we feel that we may have to scrutinise very carefully, and are somewhat relieved if after all we have no need to quarrel with them, in our loyalty to the scrupulous exactness of spiritual truth. Such an antecedent attitude towards any elaborated exposition, in its origin local and temporary, and by lapse of time necessarily somewhat old-fashioned in expression, does not seem to me at all disloyal in an intelligent Churchman. Towards the fundamental propositions of the baptismal creed I think it would be so; but it is very different with the legal confession of a national or local branch of the Church.

But though, speaking thus in the abstract, I may have seemed to speak hitherto of the articles in too slighting a tone, I of course admit that the Church of England—whatever she may claim

to be besides—is in fact a legal body, and legally established; and that so long as she continues without protest so to be, I cannot in honesty claim her membership or seek office at her hands unless I am able to accept what she deliberately maintains as a formal statement of her position and belief. If theoretically she might vary the articles at any time, practically there would be very great difficulties in the way of her doing so. In any case, till she does so, their obligation upon those who represent her is real.

And when we come to examine the articles in detail, with whatever antecedent nervousness or even suspicion, I cannot but say for myself, and for any others, whose minds I could succeed in influencing, that what we find, even if some of us may be happily surprised in finding it, is that the statements are such as we need feel no scruple in accepting. It might so easily have happened that statements drawn up amid the stress and the strain of the vehement passions which were raging in the struggle of the Reformation, would have been just in the form which we, in the sober thought of the nineteenth century, could not have endorsed. But this is just what has not happened. Condemnation of Roman theory or practice, failing to make any necessary distinction or allowances, might so easily have had just the irremediable trace of exaggeration upon them. Approximations to Calvinism or to Lutheranism might so easily have gone just beyond the line of

what was, in the long run, rationally defensible! It may even be admitted that, *prima facie*, there is a certain aspect of ambiguity in some of these directions. And yet, on examination, after all, in one article after another, the almost expected overstatement has not been made. You may say that the seventeenth article comes very near to Calvinism, or the eleventh to the characteristic formula of Lutheran solifidianism. But, on the other hand, as the mind begins to recognise that the lengthy and apparently Calvinistic phraseology of the article about Predestination just stops short of all that is really offensive in connexion with that theory, remaining after all within those aspects of it which are edifying and true; and again, that the apparent embrace of the cardinal Lutheran principle of justification by faith only is exactly not in the paradoxical terms in which Luther loved to overstate it; there begins to be a certain definite and growing sense that, though the articles may carry us into forgotten controversies, and make some statements which have but little relevance to our modern difficulties, at all events there was, amongst those who drew them, too much of genuine conservatism, of reverence for what was good in the old ways, of self-restraint and moderating wisdom, to allow of their committing themselves or us to the extremer and more unguarded statements even of those with whom they greatly sympathised.

The twenty-eighth and some phrases of the

twenty-ninth articles may have seemed, to those who read them for controversial purposes, off-hand, to intend a low view of the mystery of the Christian Eucharist; but I can hardly imagine that anyone could weigh them judicially and devoutly, with a view to his own possibility of conscientious acceptance of them, without realising that their condemnation is reserved for what are really unspiritual exaggerations of the truth. On the other hand, I must maintain that the teaching of the ninth and tenth articles about original sin and freewill is such, that if, on first thoughts, we felt afraid of the music or association of the phrases, we must, on second thoughts, recognise that it would only be a superficial theology which could take serious exception against what they really have said. Even in the case of the thirteenth article, which perhaps has been thought the most disquieting of all; which undoubtedly is not expressed in the form in which a nineteenth-century theologian would have preferred to express it, and which, as it stands, is capable of interpretations which we certainly do *not* mean; I must still maintain that it is a perfectly genuine attempt to express what is itself, after all, not false, but true. The truth which I believe that they really meant, I mean. And if there be verbal ambiguity, and the possibility of a verbal interpretation which we instinctively protest against, this is only exactly what is true about the Scripture itself, with which herein it

rather corresponds than conflicts. The only sinless manhood is the manhood of Christ. Only so far as it represents and shares in the Spirit of the Christ can human working be really acceptable to God. The sinlessness of Christ is unique. Sinlessness in man is through and in the Christ-Spirit *alone*.

But when I use language like this about the thirteenth article, I shall rather expect to be told, first, that I am attempting to make it mean what is not what it does mean; and secondly, that in so doing, and in justifying my acceptance of it on such a plea, I am introducing in fact the very principle of unnatural interpretations which I had professed to exclude.

I should like to meet such a suggestion quite directly. It is suggested that I am making the article mean what is not its meaning. What, then, is its meaning? and what is the standard or test by which its actual meaning is to be measured? For myself I must answer that the only really binding standard is its words. It will doubtless be held, on some sides, that the true test of its meaning is either the meaning of those who first shaped the words, or of those who now tender them to us for our acceptance. The latter alternative would mean the present Church of England as a whole—in her total complex character, as Catholic at once, and "protesting," and established. The former alternative would similarly mean the Church of England as a whole, as she

first gave her assent and acceptance to the article. I will speak of each of these in a moment.

But first I must say, speaking in the way of abstract principle, that it is not without some reserve that I should admit that either of these is itself, quite strictly or properly, the standard *for me* of honest and truthful interpretation and acceptance of articles. Even in the case of creeds, whose inherent authority is far more august, I was anxious to disclaim the view that any general popular interpretation as such, even with a prescription of centuries behind it, was the final measure or test of words which it was at least conceivable that the Church might have repeated for centuries with inadequate intelligence of their meaning. In the case of articles, if on the one side their phrases are less near to inspired Scripture (and therefore less likely to be full of unexplored meanings), on the other side (as I urged just now) they have very much more of the character of a merely legal document, to be interpreted, like a legal document, not so much by what any one means or did mean in them as by what they actually say. If, indeed, my honest understanding and acceptance of any article is one which the whole organised Church agrees to pronounce inadmissible, I do not dispute their power to extrude me as heterodox: and there is, I believe, such a thing as real spiritual martyrdom of this kind. But not even in the case of so extreme a suggestion as this

should I admit that my acceptance of them, in the sense which I believed to be their legitimate and real one, had been in any sense, *in me*, dishonest or untrue. But this, after all, is only abstract and hypothetical.

Descending from hypothesis, I should totally deny the suggestion that, in fact, I am taking any liberty with the meaning at all. I say that the words are a genuine attempt to express a truth which I recognise as true. If anyone tells me that the meaning which I should repudiate was the meaning of the Church which drew the words, I certainly dispute the fact. I do not deny that it may have been the meaning of some of the writers of them. I do not deny that it may even have been the current sense of the majority. But I do maintain, first, that the words do not necessarily carry, though they may suggest, such a meaning; and secondly, that in this article, as in others, the fact that the words have this element of ambiguity about them after all, was itself (far more than is generally supposed) a deliberate result of the instinct and purpose of the Body as a whole which drew the articles; none the less so, even if it were admitted that they, most of them, individually, would have accepted a rigidity of interpretation which I trust that no one would dream of accepting now. Even at the moment that I refuse to admit that I should be tied by their purpose in the words, I must also doubt whether it was even their purpose to tie me.

That, in spite of any appearance to the contrary, the articles were not accidentally, but deliberately, inclusive, is affirmed in a striking passage which has been suggested to me—a passage by one who was no friend to Churchmanship, or to standards of doctrine, and who cannot, even in the passage itself, refrain from flinging his taunt at all pronouncements of Church councils—Mr. Anthony Froude. He is writing about Dr. Newman and his famous attempt to show that the articles bore a really Catholic sense. He says: "As far as Tract xc is concerned, public opinion, after taking time to reflect, has pronounced Newman acquitted. It is historically certain that Elizabeth and her ministers intentionally framed the Church formulas so as to enable everyone to use them who would disclaim allegiance to the Pope. The English Catholics [he means, of course, Roman Catholics], who were then more than half the nation, applied to the Council of Trent for leave to attend the English Church services, on the express ground that no Catholic doctrine was denied in them. The Council of Trent refused permission, and the petitioners, after hesitating till in the defeat of the Armada providence had declared for the Queen, conformed (the greater number of them) on their own terms . . . Newman was only claiming a position for himself and his friends which had been purposely left open when the constitution of the Anglican Church was formed."

I may add that if it was the deliberate purpose of the articles to be inclusive towards the elder Catholics, while their very *raison d'être* was protest against Rome, it can hardly, on any hypothesis, be thought disloyal to the Church which framed them to accept whatever interpretation, in other directions, is found compatible with their words.

But if there be any, even the smallest, colour for suggesting that it was not the purpose, even of the Elizabethan Church, to tie all minds to the rigider conceptions of which such words were patient—though such conceptions were, it may be, overcurrent in those days—how immeasurably less could it be contended, even for an instant, that such rigidities are part of the purpose of the Church as she tenders the articles for our acceptance now! A sufficient practical testimony to this, if testimony were needed, would be furnished by the anxiety which culminated thirty years ago in the alteration both of statute and canon, in order that the terms of legal adhesion to the articles might be felt to be quite general in character. I do not think, indeed, that even the previous terms were so searching as they are sometimes supposed to be. The language of the Act of Uniformity of 1662 seems to be the most stringent: "I do hereby declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the book intituled the Book of Common

Prayer," etc., which, of course, included the articles, though without any special reference made to them. The language embodied in the thirty-sixth canon had obliged a man to say that he "acknowledged all and every the Articles, being in number nine and thirty, to be agreeable to the Word of God." The present requirement at the time of ordination is the solemn making of the following declaration: "I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles. . . . I believe the doctrine of the Church of England as therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God."

I do not think that it was a very heavy burden to say that "the Articles were all agreeable to the Word of God." But the change from this into saying that "the doctrine of the Church of England as set forth in the Articles is agreeable to the Word of God," be it greater or smaller in itself, undoubtedly was, and was meant to be, a change for the express purpose of avoiding even the semblance of an over-rigid identification with every detail of perhaps imperfectly applicable phraseology.

I have now, perhaps, come to the end of what I immediately set out to do. I have had before me the thought of the practical relation of young men, as Christians, and particularly as possible clergymen, to the acceptance of the doctrinal standards which challenge them. I have spoken of the essential creeds of the Catholic Church, and of the articles of the Church of England as

by law established, and of the greatness of the contrast between them. Of the Old Testament I have not spoken at all, though doubtful at one time whether it should be introduced in this context or no. I can only say, summarily, that any question as to the legitimateness of our entire adhesion, in the Ordinal, to its truth, seems to me altogether unreal. The full reality of my belief in the *truth* of the Old Testament will not in any case be affected by my new conceptions (if my conceptions are new) as to the right historical interpretation of its *meaning*. But that is, perhaps, a rather different subject.

I have tried, then, to represent that jealousy against doctrinal standards, as creeds, is wholly misplaced ; and that anxiety about our particular articles dissolves when they are examined.

And I must say finally that I cannot think that, whether in the direction of creeds, or of articles, or of Ordinal promises, the intellect of the Anglican clergyman need be under any apprehension at all. Rational intellect is not narrowed, nor fettered, by any true conditions of Christian theology. Christian theology is—if anything is in this world—a deep, and large, and progressive, because *living,* reality.

It is true, no doubt, that the insight of Christian theology is only for those to whom the Incarnation, with its corollaries in thought and in life, is true. To outsiders, who are really outsiders, and do not know what this means, it may

be perhaps a natural instinct to look upon any acceptance of any transcendent truth—anything which makes their own unaided intellect not ultimate—as disabling. But to those who have had any real grasp of personal experience upon the meaning of the religion of the Incarnation—in the life of the Church, which is the Personal Spirit of the Incarnate—such an instinct will be only more and more astonishing. It is in unreserved allegiance to the Christ, and in the progressive transformation of the imperfect, sundered, lonely "individual" with whom the experience of each one of us seems to start into the freedom and power of the life of the Spirit of the Incarnate, that man, in that consciousness of the Pauline paradox—"I; yet not I"—begins really to find "himself." It is in the Pentecostal Spirit that man's own personality, in every aspect of which it is capable—as Love, as Will, as Might, even as Reason—begins to be raised towards the realisation of those possibilities of which the self of man is inherently capable, and in which alone his personality is perfected. But that perfecting of personality involves a change—nay, a transfiguration—of the self, such as in its earliest challenge had looked, perhaps, like a betrayal, or at least an abandonment, of what the naked self once seemed to demand, that it might even *be* a "self" at all.

# THE PASTORAL OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

(A sermon preached at the consecration of Charles Gore, Bishop of Worcester, in Lambeth Chapel, on St. Matthias' Day, 1902.)

"*The care of all the Churches*" (2 Cor. xi. 28).

With this I would venture to connect, in all reverence, the memory of our Lord's own words—

"*For their sakes I sanctify myself*" (St. John xvii. 19).

THE wonderful list of St. Paul's apostolic sufferings has a climax, and the climax is this: this daily, incessant demand, this care, this anxiety, this relation to souls, and to grouped communities of souls, which is inherent in Christian pastorship. The very word "pastor" has a sense essentially Christian. Its meaning has been transformed by Him who was "the Good Shepherd," and who has taught for ever, by word as by act, what the meaning is of that name—"the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."

Mediaeval thought would define priesthood by the ceremonial acts which it was distinctively empowered to perform. But these, after all, were but symptoms, were but methods, of a more far-reaching and essential relation to souls, which included, indeed, which was characterised by, but which transcended, the ministerial privilege,

whether of enacting the Eucharistic rite or of absolving penitents.

So it is with the Bishop. It is not the distinctive power of confirming, or ordaining, or consecrating, or blessing,—still less is it any dignity of prelacy or lordship—which constitutes the reality of bishopric. These, at most, are rather the natural symptoms, the inevitable methods or utterances, of an essential spiritual relation (the true fatherly relation) to the flock. Not a flock without a shepherd, nor a shepherd without a flock; not a family without a father, nor a father without a family: this is the constitution which formed itself under the hands of Apostles, and which the apostolic generation has bequeathed to the Church. The pastor, the father, without whom the spiritual community cannot be complete: this is the Bishop. He is the father, not in things secular primarily, but in spiritual things: the father who preaches and teaches, the father who counsels and guides, the father who meditates and prays, and *therefore* the father who holds responsibility, who rules and decides, who reproves and corrects. His jurisdiction is a necessary aspect (or correlative) of his fatherliness; but pastorship more than jurisdiction, fatherliness rather than rule, is the basis and heart of the matter. He is an official exercising jurisdiction only because he is first the father who intercedes and teaches and loves. Of this essential relation of fatherliness to that flock

which finds its own completeness only in him, the power to confirm or ordain are the natural, the inevitable, methods and channels. They are no added ornaments, nor are they irrationally restrained to the Bishop's office, to give him a factitious dignity. They are effects which outflow, corollaries which are inseparable, from his inherent relation to the spiritual life of his flock. For the Bishop is indeed the chief pastor, the spiritual father, of the souls of his people.

"I entreat thee," writes Ignatius to Polycarp the Bishop—"I entreat thee, in the grace wherewith thou hast been clothed, to run with thy might, and to exhort all men, that they may be saved. Vindicate thine office in all diligent care, of body and spirit. Be thoughtful for unity, than which nothing is better. Be the bearer of all men, as the Lord beareth thee. Be forbearing with all men, in love, as indeed thou doest. Be incessant, be unhurried, in prayers. Ask for wisdom—more than thou hast. Be wakeful; keep thy spirit from slumbering. To all, man by man, speak after the character of God. Bear the sicknesses of all, as a perfect athlete. Where more labour is, is much gain."

I have wished to strike first this note—the note (as I cannot but believe) of the primitive, the true, the spiritual,—may I say the *believing?*—view of episcopate. Leisure for prayerfulness; directness of spiritual influence, in patience, in intimacy, in love; in a word, pastoral fatherhood.

From such a point of view, may I venture to look in the face the risk which we too often run, even while we anxiously conserve the framework, of yet losing too much of the heart of what bishopric means? For human capacity is very limited; and true bishopric over millions is impossible to man. A Bishop who is drowned in necessary secular business cannot be felt meanwhile as a father of souls. To be the official head of department over the formal organisation of huge numbers of clergy: to be not the head only, but in large part also the hands, of a great and undermanned office or bureau: to be immersed in correspondence largely secular, technical, or even merely legal: to travel about here, there, everywhere, over an area in which he cannot, save mediately and indirectly, either know or be known: or to be a dignified ecclesiastical official, intervening, largely as a stranger, and, therefore, without obvious rationale, to consecrate or to confirm: things like these we know do not come near to an adequate rendering of the richness of the Bishop's pastorship. Do they not come, sometimes, dangerously near to the limit of a Bishop's possibilities? Eagerly we still call our Bishop the chief pastor of all his diocese. Is there any episcopal title which is in so much peril of losing its essential meaning? For human capacity is very limited: and it may be that duties technical and secular are more insistent than those which belong to that "silence

of the Bishop" which Ignatius praised.[1] It is a serious thing, indeed, if, by impossible demands, we kill our Bishops. But it is more serious by far if, in any measure, we run the risk of killing the very conception of the ideal of bishopric.

Are words like these a transgression of the preacher's duty, or right? At least, let us ask ourselves two practical questions—meant, both of them, to suggest how largely our own popular conception of episcopate has, in fact, been affected by the existing conditions. First, has it not become a familiar fashion of mind, among dutiful Churchmen, to see no need of any considerable increase of episcopate? I am not now at all concerned with any question of practical difficulties, financial or political, but simply with what is ideally desirable. Are there not vast numbers who have ceased to see anything ideally desirable in the thought of more, or at least of many more, Bishops? who have so framed their ideal of bishopric upon what Bishops can do, under modern conditions in England, as rather to find reasons for themselves *against* subdividing dioceses, even in the cases where subdivision is most urgent—most urgent, possibly, for this very reason, because in the absence of any real conception of what effective chief pastorship would mean, the very desire for the oversight of chief pastorship is gone? Consider what it means, as a phenomenon, this widespread acquiescence,

[1] Eph. vi.

and more than acquiescence, in the present conditions—of great episcopal dignity indeed, but of fatherhood too largely paralysed.

Again, another phenomenon. Are there not very many who are inclined to grudge our best and holiest, our most learned and most weighty preachers, or theologians, or men of wise and spiritual influence, to that wearily overladen official life which they have felt themselves compelled to recognise as the practical meaning of bishopric? Are there not, or have there not been, men whom—not because of any weakness of health, but because of their very excellence of spiritual leadership—it has been supposed to be something like a *waste* to burden with the harness of a Bishop? Is this feeling not familiar? And is it not a disaster, just so far as it is a fact? Could anything make any real compensation to the Church if our Bishops are not to be, in the fullest sense, our real chiefs and leaders in things spiritual?

We *must* have, in the council of the Bishops, our best, our wisest, our most spiritual, our true leaders and teachers. Could *anything* compensate to the Church, if men such as these, the men of real insight and influence, should hold tightly to their pulpits or to their studies, and should leave the office of a Bishop to be discharged, not by men of special spiritual wisdom, but by officials of specialised capacity for organising business, or with a turn for the shrewd dexterities

of secular diplomacy? It is the true fatherly chief pastorate of souls, it is episcopal wisdom in council, the best—because the most spiritual—guidance of the body of the Church, which the Church always needs, and cannot dispense with, in her Bishops. She needs that which she cannot have, unless the wisest, the greatest, the most influential, the holiest of her sons are within, not without, the council and the responsibility of the Bishops. She needs them, and she needs them *there*. And therefore it is that—in spite of obvious or (it may be) of personal losses—so many of us can rejoice, with a rare fulness of heart, in the thought of this morning's service. She needs them, and she needs them *there*. But she needs them there, not that they may then be wholly immersed in organisation of details; not that they may never again have leisure even to think; not that the spiritual capacities may be starved, or almost starved, even in their own lives; but that they may be able effectively to meditate, and teach, and direct, and inspire, and be the true fountain and guide of the spiritual experience and subordinate pastorship of many; many who lean on and are wise through them.

Do these last phrases sound Utopian, so Utopian as to be almost sarcasm? The idea of the presbyters of any diocese leaning on the Bishop, or being wise *through* the wisdom that is in him? But, indeed, the paradox, if paradox it be, serves to illustrate, from another side, the

harm that may ensue from any paralysis of the *spiritual* effectiveness of episcopate. As it is harm to Bishops and harm to the general community of the Church, which loses the true appreciation of bishopric, and the whole moral attitude of those who submit to rule and oversight in spiritual things, so is it emphatically a harm to presbyters, and to the conception and ideal of presbyterate.

Is it not true, or what does it mean if true, that the presbyter in modern England—not in proportion to his failure, but in proportion rather to his success, in proportion as by diligent self-sacrifice in work he approaches towards realising his own ideal—is only too often found to be one who has absorbed, or is absorbing, into himself, not only almost all the distinctive duties and rights of the Church laity, but no small part also of the ultimate responsibility and judgment which are inherent in the chief pastorship of the Bishop?

This is through no fault of his own. It results from the pressure of age-long conditions. But so it is, that the very name of "*pastorship*," and almost all the direct associations which belong to it, tend to be almost monopolised by presbyterate. And so too presbyterate has, by custom, only too completely monopolised that title and prerogative of "*priesthood*" which used to belong, even more distinctively, to the Bishops. Things like these have peril enough. But the claim to a final voice of responsible judgment in

respect of the administration of spiritual things; the claim to relegate the Bishop to a special department of his own—dignified, but strictly circumscribed and practically very remote; to allow him only, perhaps, a sort of visitatorial power for interpreting obligations of statute law—while the presbyter assumes as his own all the ultimate decision, all that responsibility of judgment as to details of pastoral service (whether in church or out of it) which is felt to be inherent in cure of souls; this is, so far as it anywhere appears, an even more direct invasion of that jurisdiction, which is correlative to the fatherhood, of bishopric.

Is it not true, therefore, that if there is one thing more than another which would bring back again to its orderly place whatever there is now of irresponsible presbyteral action, or claim, it would be the effective restoration of the Bishop to his proper possibility of direct pastoral leadership in spiritual things? A restoration this would be, to the presbyterate and to the community, of their dutiful relation (not as to an officer of police, or even an official head of department), but of their dutiful relation in things spiritual, not temporal or legal, to the fatherhood—not the lordship—of the Bishop. And such a restoration, whatever else may be made to subserve it more or less importantly, will surely never be a thoroughly accomplished reality until the impossible width of the Bishop's sphere in modern England is

very largely diminished by a very large multiplication of sees. No doubt the question will ask itself, "Where are the men?" But belief in episcopacy as a system, as an apostolic inheritance, is a very different thing from belief in the personal greatness of individual Bishops, or in the indispensableness of the qualities, intellectual or otherwise, which go to make secular greatness. To ask for too much in the way of human distinction is not to believe in the Divine sanction of the institution of episcopate. It is rather to reduce it, after all, to the level of a merely human expedient.

But I do not stand here to discuss political possibilities, nor to advocate schemes, whether of greater or of less far-reaching innovation. I point rather to ideals, and have ventured to say thus much not to misuse such an occasion as this for purposes alien to our prayers this morning, but rather to give direction and emphasis to our prayers.

Let us pass from all the region of things disputable; still more from every memory of recrimination, or suspicion, or carnal heat of feeling. Not controversy, not apology, not enthusiasm for experiment, but Divine quiet is to be the real note of our service this morning.

We are withdrawn from the rush of the world; withdrawn for a special realising of the presence of God. The presence of God is not primarily local, however much it may be subserved by

locality. It is primarily spiritual; a presence to spirit, of Spirit. According to the spiritual sincerity, according to the capacity of corresponding with spiritual reality, the reality of the presence itself is, in very truth, less or more. We are withdrawn for a special entering into the presence of God; withdrawn for a special consecration—from God, and to God. A scene of consecration? Yes; and we too, all of us, are to take our part in it. The effort of our spirits, responding in earnest, fervent desire to the Spirit of God within us, is to form part of the spiritual atmosphere—part of the Divine quiet and the Divine strength—which are to be, from this day forth and for ever, elements in the consecration of him whose consecration specially it is. Think, if you will, what the preparation must be, what the reflecting and ordering of heart, of one who comes to receive consecration as Bishop. Think—not that we may intrude—but that we may realise what it is with which we have to correspond, what it is to which we have to contribute our spiritual part. Think also of what we can conceive a Bishop, with his consecration upon him, as representing, wherever he goes, in his diocese. Think of the atmosphere of prayer, the realisation of peace, the gentleness of sympathy, the patience of love; think of him as a fountain to all the diocese, and to its thirsty places, of spiritual hope, and spiritual life; so that, wherever he goes, something is felt, in him, of

the manifestation of the character of God. By his thoughts and his ways; by his aims and his method of working towards his aims; by his patience and fortitude; by his radiant cheeriness and kindliness, his inherent gladness of heart; by his wisdom and tact, his self-denial and self-devotion, men and women are to see glimpses—such glimpses as the heart can discern and thrill to—of the Spirit which is his life; and are to recognise and own that he has been with, that he has come from—nay, that he carries with him, in what they feel that he *is*—the very Spirit of Jesus. For a consecration is upon him, a consecration abiding and effectual. And the consecration is this. To the atmosphere of such a consecration we are to contribute. We are called, by what we are, to help it—as we can, by what we are, hinder it.

The Body of Christ is one Body. And he, the Bishop elect, for what he is to become to the diocese of Worcester—must we not go on, dare we venture *not* to go on to say with uttermost reverence?—He, the Lord Jesus Christ, for what He is to become in the souls of all His children, demands, and in a true sense needs, this day, the effort of the uplifting of our spirit, consecrating itself in sincere and dutiful prayer—as in His Presence, as through His power.

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